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The First Epistle

TO THE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH,

ON THE EVE OF THE

MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

OF

CHRIST;

OR, A COMPLETE

KEY TO THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT:

WITH THE

FULFILMENT, IN SUCCESSION,

OF THE

Prophecies of our Blessed Saviour.

VOL. I.

BY T. WHOWELL.

"We shall reign on the earth." Revelations, v. 10. "What sign shall there be?" Christ's answer—"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke, xxi. 25, 26.

WITH THE

Past and present State of the Jews,

AND THE

APPEARANCE OF THEIR RESTORATION.

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY RICHARD SUTTON.

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PREFACE.

IN sending forth this work, the author disavows every motive but the sole one of being useful.—Though all periods may be supposed favorable for the discussion of subjects of such solemn and weighty nature as are here examined, yet if one portion of time may be considered as more immediately interesting than another, the present is eminently so, distinguished as it is by a freedom of inquiry unprecedented in former ages,—in which the most sacred truths are attempted to be brought under human decision. It is in such seasons, therefore, that the believer is called upon to review the near approaching time of Christ's millennial kingdom; and it is peculiarly gratifying, when we see that the doctrines of the established church of this country are founded upon the scriptures, and derive their sole authority from them.

And the author of this work, though conscious how very inadequately the subject is treated of in

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the following chapters and epistles, yet expresses a humble hope, that no member of the orthodox persuasion, will suffer himself to be led away from the faith, by any specious arguments of modern divinity, until he shall have examined what is here advanced, in proof of this near and great change.

Indeed, when the author considers the greatness of God, and the importance of the doctrines here advocated, he has no fear upon this head. Secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law. Outward nature itself attests His greatness. If we contemplate the firmament of heaven—the sun, with all his attendant planets, is but a very little part of the grand machine of the universe. Every star, though in appearance no larger than the diamond that glitters on a lady's ring, is really a vast globe, equal to the sun in size and in glory; nor is it less spacious or luminous than the radient source of our day. Can any thing be more wonderful than this display of omnipotence? Yes! there are truths far more stupendous,—there are scenes far more extensive! for as there is no end to the greatness of the Almighty, so no imagination can set limits to His creating hand. Could you soar beyond the moon, and pass through all the planetary armies—could you wing your way to the highest apparent star, and take your stand on one of the loftiest pinnacles

of heaven, still you would there see other skies expanded! nor does the dominion of the universal Sovereign terminate even there.

How mighty are his wonders! and, if so, what is the CREATOR himself! How far exalted above all praise is He, who looks down on the highest of these dazzling spheres, and sees even the summit of creation in a vale—so great, that this prodigious extent of space is but a point in his presence. O thou most sublime, and incomprehensibly glorious God, how are we overwhelmed with awe, when we consider thy excellent greatness, and our own utter insignificancy. And have we, excessively mean as we are—have we entertained any conceited ideas of ourselves? Have we felt the least elatement of thought in the presence of so majestic and adorable a being? How should this wound us with sorrow, and cover us with confusion! O, our God, were we possessed of all the high perfections which accomplish and adorn the angels of light; amidst all those noble endowments we would fall down in the deepest abasement at thy feet—lost in the infinitely superior blaze of thy uncreated glories, and would confess ourselves to be nothing, to be "less than nothing and vanity." How much more then ought I to maintain the most unfeigned humiliation before the Divine Majesty, who am not only dust and ashes, but a compound of ignorance, imperfection, and depravity.

How great are thy wonders, how mighty are thy works, and how mean—how low are we,

> "How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
> How complicate, how wonderful is man:
> How passing wonder He who made him such.
> A worm—a God! I tremble at myself,
> And in myself am lost. At home a stranger,
> Thought wanders up and down amazed, aghast."
>
> YOUNG.

And while every thing, both within and without us, declares the glory of God, surely we ought to pay some little attention to the truth. Ought we not steadily to look at those doctrines which God has declared? Let us then with full purpose of heart turn to the Lord, and he will shine into our hearts, and enable us to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

ADDRESS TO THE READER.

"THE natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are *spiritually* discerned." There is a power in sin which blinds the eyes, and hardens the heart of those who are under its influence; so that even when the truth in its brightness is set before them, they can neither discern nor appreciate its value. The first and principal thing requisite to a knowledge of the truth, is a willingness to receive and to profit by it, and so long as there remains in the mind, that love of evil which is enmity against God, it is in vain to expect that truth will be received. "If any man will do his will," said the Saviour, "he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God;" from which the opposite naturally arises, if any man will *not* do his will, he *cannot* know those doctrines which are of God. He may hear them from others, and be able to repeat what he has heard, but he cannot have that full conviction, that knowledge of them, which leads onward to eternal life.

Man in an unregenerate state, is described in the word of God, as destitute of every means of spiritual enjoyment. He is "blind," he is "deaf," he is "speechless," he is "dead." As God is the source of life, and as all *true* life consists in the reception of his love and truth, the merely sensual man who has them not, though he may possess a natural existence, is "dead while he liveth."

As he only "hears" the truth of God, who is disposed to *obey* it, so the unregenerate man, who has no such disposition, is "deaf to the voice of his Maker." As his intellectual powers are bent to earth and the things of time, he cannot perceive, nor apprehend the glories of eternity. He has the *form* of man, but the true dignity of human nature is not to be found.

Under these circumstances, we may compare such a character to a statue, which, though nobly conceived and beautifully formed, is placed in an inverted position. The intellect of man was formed to receive the knowledge of God, and thus to be elevated to heaven; while the outward powers only were to be upon the earth: but this order is destroyed. The head, the intellectual faculties, are fixed upon the earth, and employed on earthly and insignificant objects; while the feet alone are elevated towards heaven. Or in other words, his mind is employed only upon "the world and the things of the world," and all the religion which he possesses, is confined to conversation, or the performance of outward and formal duty. In this state the influence of God does not reach his heart; for the way to the heart is by the understanding, and his understanding is far from God: but the influence of the world, and the influence of evil enter there, for on these is his understanding fixed. And as to a *man* in such a position every object appears inverted; as the earth appears *above* him, and heaven *below* him: so to the man who is in this inverted order, natural things appear of the highest importance, and spiritual and eternal objects are viewed as mere *chimeras*, or at least as things of little or no moment. Such is the state of a natural man.

By reversing this picture, we may behold the image of the *spiritual* man. His understanding is elevated and receives the light of truth, and that truth descends into his heart, cleansing and purifying him from evil. His outward conversation only is on earth, but his mind is in heaven,

where his treasure lies. He beholds things in a proper point of view; eternity appears of the utmost importance, and time comparatively insignificant and valueless.

Such being the states of the natural and spiritual man, it is evident why St. Paul declares, that the former "cannot see the things of God." He is not in a position to view them. His eyes are cast downwards toward the earth,—his understanding grovels in the dust: and as the understanding must be in the *light* of heaven before it can see the things of heaven; so the natural man, whose understanding is not in this light, cannot possibly discern them until the whole state of his mind is changed; and the order of his faculties completely reversed.

To behold the truth, therefore, a man must be in some degree in the love of the truth. Nor is truth to be loved merely as it serves to gratify curiosity, but for its own sake, and in its own nature: because it proceeds from God; and in order that our evils, being manifested by its influence, they may be rejected and put away.

If any one, who has more leisure and better abilities, will set the glorious doctrine of the millennium in a clearer and yet more scriptural light, he will do a good and acceptable work unto mankind, and shall have my hearty prayers, though my own work should be thrown into oblivion. The truths of God are a great deep, and are not easily searched out, nor are they seen into all at once. Let no man despise a little light, but let him use that till he can obtain more; so that his path may be as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The gospel, thanks be to God, is spreading swiftly abroad; like the leaven, it is fermenting, until a little leaven shall leaven the whole lump; till all shall bow to the name of Jesus, and the glory of the Lord shall fill all lands. In the mean time, let all who love our Lord Jesus pray earnestly that his kingdom may come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

God seems to be preparing the way for the brightness of his appearing, not only in these islands, in which his salvation has gone forth as a lamp which burneth, for fifty or sixty years past, but, as we are credibly informed, he is bringing mighty things to pass in America, and in the West India Islands; even amongst the poor negroes, great numbers of whom are brought to rejoice in a sin-pardoning God. The noble efforts which have been made in behalf of the poor Africans, wear a most auspicious aspect; and should their liberty be accomplished, and that most infernal commerce, *the slave trade*, be abolished, I should not be surprised to hear, that God should call some of the converted negroes from their banishment, and send them to preach the Saviour of all men to their benighted countrymen; so that the wilderness and the solitary may be glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Ride on, thou matchless conqueror, till the whole world shall bow to thy sway! Let thy dominions be from sea to sea! yea, from pole to pole! Let tyranny and oppression cease, and let pure benevolence and love overflow all the earth, and fill every human heart! So prays, so longs, candid reader, your humble servant in the gospel.

TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

SUBMIT YOURSELVES TO THE GUIDANCE OF HIM WHO IS EMPHATICALLY STYLED, THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.

IT is an awful and important declaration, which God has made by his prophet, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." In the great concern of salvation, any dependance upon an arm of flesh is as foolish as it is useless. Man, however wise, however pious, is liable to err. To all his reasonings, as to all his actions, imperfection attaches itself; and it is only by following implicitly the Word of God, that we can repose in safety upon a secure foundation. The common sense and reason of man agree in this.

The Almighty—the KING ETERNAL, IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE, THE ONLY WISE GOD—is in his essence incomprehensible by a nature less perfect than his own: yet upon a proper knowledge of God depends our salvation; for what we do not *know*, we cannot *love*. Finite and imperfect as we are, we have no means in ourselves of obtaining this knowledge: if, therefore, we ever obtain it, and by obtaining it escape eternal ruin, it must be by a revelation from God himself; for, "as no man knoweth the Son but the Father, so no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son" (the Eternal manifested truth) "will reveal him."

It is then the perfection of folly, in a concern like this, to leave the written declarations of God, for the creeds and reasonings of men. Trust not your everlasting interests, my brethren, to the keeping of human beings, as erring and as imperfect as yourselves: but with humble dependance upon eternal wisdom, submit yourselves to the guidance of HIM who is emphatically styled THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE." Instead of doing this, you have leaned upon the broken reed of human opinions, and exposed the fate of a never ending existence, to the frail and useless support of arguments, drawn, not from the armoury of divine truth, but from the prejudices, the passions, or the convenience of man.

You, my dear friends, are immortal beings, and permit me to remind you, *responsible* ones also. It is not merely for the outward actions of life that man has to give an account, but for the motives which prompted, and the causes which produced those actions. It requires no argument to prove that the nature of our faith gives a character to our conduct; and that the life of a man, whether considered as a public or a private character, depends in a great measure upon the ideas which he entertains of his Maker—of revelation—and of a future state of being.—If these ideas are *correct*, they will assert a proper influence upon his conduct: if they are *erroneous*, the actions which spring out of them will be erroneous also: if they are *vague* and *undefined*, the character of the man will, like his views, be vacillating and unfixed. *Faith* is the spring of action, and as is the spring, so will be the waters.

But if the complexion of man's outward actions is derived from his opinions, then, for those *opinions*, as the principles of conduct, he is responsible to God. It is an assertion of the present age, that man is not accountable for his *belief*, since that belief is not under his control.—If this be true it will follow, that man is not accountable

at all; for a mere exertion of the body, abstracted from a governing principle of the mind, is no subject either of reward or punishment, any more than the involuntary movements of an automaton. *Words*, considered as a succession of sounds, and separated from *ideas* of which they are the signs, are neither good nor evil, any more than the howling of the wind, or the roar of the ocean.—For mere bodily motion, and mere bodily sound, man is not therefore responsible:—it is for action as the *expression of principle*,—for words, as the *signs of ideas:* or, in plain language, for the principles and ideas themselves that he is accountable. Now these principles and ideas, seated in his understanding, are what constitute *his faith;* and for this faith he is either responsible, or he is not responsible *at all*, seeing he cannot be judged for *action without faith.*

Considered in this view, the religious sentiments of a man are highly important; and in the same view, the difference existing between Unitarians and their opponents, is one of no light and trifling character. Let us notice for a few moments their adverse principles, and then consider what a directly opposite influence they must exert upon the actions of their followers. The dispute between them affects the closest and dearest interests of man, and involves within it the nature of God himself. While the latter acknowledge a *triune* distinction in the Divine Being, and worship a God, who as THE FATHER is invisible and unknown, in THE SON is manifested, and as THE SPIRIT operates upon man, the former believe only in an unknown and unmanifested God—unmanifested except so far as the productions of nature, and the harmony of the universe proclaim his power. While the one receive the scriptures as infallible in their declarations, and as containing in themselves the infinite wisdom of their author, the others are not afraid to hold up to view the pretended *errors* of the sacred writers—to

pronounce Paul "an inconclusive reasoner," and the Saviour himself—a *tyro* in natural philosophy.* While the adherents of the common opinion look forward to a life beyond the grave, when the body is no more, the generality of Unitarians see in man only a peculiar modification of matter, and expect to sleep insensible in the tomb, till the divine power restores again the material frame. While the former, in accordance with the unvarnished declarations of the bible, look upon eternal punishment as the reward of continued obstinacy, the latter exult in the idea, that a revolution of ages must bring all to happiness, and the bottomless pit restore its purified inhabitants to the abodes of bliss. Without entering into the minuter portions of the dispute, it will at once be apparent that differences like these, involving the nature of God, the authority of the scriptures, the state of man, and the reward of evil, must, as *principles of action* (and every idea fixed in the mind *is* a principle of action), produce the most opposite effect upon the outward conduct, and give a directly opposite complexion to the human character.

If one is *right* the other is *wrong*;—wrong both in *faith*, and in *conduct*, as proceeding from faith. If THE SON OF GOD is not divine, then those who presume to pay to him divine homage, must be guilty of derogating from the honor of God, even in their most solemn services; while on the other hand, if he is "THE MIGHTY GOD" in the form of a servant, then they who refuse to acknowledge him as such, cannot worship at all; for "he that believeth not the Son, believeth not the Father who sent him." If again the scriptures be tainted with the prejudices and errors of their human compilers, we

* Such an assertion was actually made by a Unitarian minister (who has also figured as the author of several publications), at a public meeting in the town of Liverpool.

have no *sure* word of prophecy; all is uncertainty and gloom: or if they are indeed "*inbreathed*" by God, and contain the wisdom and spirit of the giver, then do they who thus charge them with error, insult the majesty of heaven, by taking away the reverence due to his word. If further, when man dies "the grave takes all," and he lies an unconscious, and insensate mass of matter, then "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." But if "there is a spirit in man," a beam of the eternal light, a spark of the divine nature, which lives and moves, and thinks and feels, when the body is no more, then well does it behove us to prepare for a change so awful and important. And lastly, if hell is but a preparation for eternal glory, then "farewell fear, farewell remorse;"—who would forego the pleasures of the world while eternal life is the certain and unavoidable end? If effects differ in proportion to the difference in their causes, then must the effect of these two systems differ as much as light and darkness.

There is yet another and a deeper source to be considered in the responsibility of man with regard to his faith. It is true that *the understanding*, the receptacle of opinions, influences the conduct, but it is equally true that *the will*, the residence of hope and love, fear and aversion, as greatly influences the understanding; and many of the errors which are found, may be traced either to the hopes or fears of the party adopting them. Where a man has every thing to lose, and nothing to gain, by the truth of an opinion, HIS WILL will at once incline his understanding to reject it; while on the contrary, if an idea (however false in itself) gives encouragement to his hopes, he will, through the influence of his affections, be as strongly inclined in its favor. It is thus that the opinions of a man take in most instances the character of his *ruling love*, and that those opinions, regulated by that love, determine his actions and his conduct.

From these few observations we may be led to a proper conclusion on the question, how far man is responsible for his errors, and how far the truth or falsehood of the Unitarian faith affects the eternal interest of the contending parties. Where error arises from invincible ignorance, which there are neither the means nor the power to remove; it is in itself a misfortune and not a crime. But where it proceeds from *the will*, from prejudice, or from evil, or where it is found arising from indolence of mind, which will not undergo the labour of examination, there it is a crime and not a misfortune. Nor do I see whilst outward evil meets its punishment, and bodily indolence its merited reward, how inward evil can be exempted from a like fate, or mental indolence escape a like punishment.

Now, on the subjects before us, it will scarcely be contended that there are not the means of information. To the scriptures, as the only criterion, both parties allow that opinions must be brought, and those scriptures are open to all. It is certainly true that there are many on both sides, whose powers of mind are not capable of entering into a long and laboured examination, but neither does the subject require it. If the express testimony of the word of God may be received, the evidence is as clear as it is convincing. The prophets, from Moses to Malachi, have left on record testimonies to the nature of the Redeemer, which need no metaphysical powers to be understood. The miracles of the Saviour, and his discourses, furnish additional proofs, and the declarations of the apostles put the top stone upon this pile of evidence.

These things we shall consider in order, not as mere speculations of opinion, but as awful realities, affecting, by our reception or denial, the whole of our future prospects.

CHAPTER II.

IF IRRATIONAL AND INANIMATE CREATION DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD—THEN WHY NOT MAN?

TO know the love of Christ, to have such a deep apprehension of his unspeakable kindness as may produce in our hearts an adoring gratitude, and an unfeigned faith; this, according to St. Paul's estimate, is the highest and happiest attainment in the sacred science of christianity.* What follows is an attempt to assist the attentive mind in learning a line or two of that best and greatest lesson. It produces the most conscious parts of the visible system, as so many prompters to our dull affections; such suggesting a hint adapted to the important occasion, and suited to its respective character.

Can there be a more powerful incentive to devout gratitude, than to consider the magnificent and delicate scenes of the universe, with a particular reference to Christ as the Creator? Every object, viewed in this light, will surely administer incessant recruits to the languishing lamp of divine love. Every production in nature will strike a spark into the soul, and the whole creation concur to raise the smoking flax into a flame.

Can any thing impart a stronger joy to the believer, or more effectually confirm his faith to the crucified Jesus, than to behold the heaven declaring his glory, and the firmament shewing his handy work? Surely it must be matter of inexpressible consolation to the poor sinner, to observe the honors of his Redeemer written with sunbeams over all the face of the world.

We delight to read an account of our incarnate Jeho-

* Eph. iii. 19.

vah, as he is revealed in the book of Moses and the prophets, as he is displayed in the writings of the evangelists and apostles. Let us also endeavour to see a sketch of his perfections as they stand delineated in that stately volume, where every leaf is a spacious plain, every line a flowing brook, and every period a lofty mountain.

Should any of my readers be unexercised in such speculations, I beg leave to present them with a specimen, or to offer a clue which may possibly lead their minds into this most improving and delightful train of thinking.

Should any be inclined to suspect the solidity of the following observations, or to condemn them as the voice of rant, and the lawless flight of fancy, I must entreat such persons to recollect, that the grand doctrine, the hinge on which they all turn, is warranted and established by the unanimous testimony of the inspired penmen, who frequently celebrate Immanuel, or Christ Jesus, as the great almighty cause of all; assuring us, that all things were created by him and for him; and that in him all things consist.*

On such a subject, what is wonderful is far from being extravagant. To be wonderful, is the inseparable characteristic of God and his works; especially of that most distinguished and glorious event of his divine works, redemption; so glorious that "all the miracles in Egypt, and the marvellous acts in the field of Zoan," all that the Jewish annals have recorded, or the human ear has heard, all dwindle into trivial events, are scarce worthy to be remembered in comparison of this infinitely grand, and infinitely gracious transaction, kindled therefore into pleasing astonishment by such a survey, let me give full scope to my meditations—let me pour out my whole soul on the boundless subject, not much regarding the limits which cold criticism, or colder unbelief, might prescribe.

O ye angels that surround the throne; ye princes of

* Col. i. 16, 17.

heaven "that excel in strength," and are clothed with transcendant brightness; he who placed you in those stations of exalted honor, and dignified your nature with such illustrious endowments; he whom you all obey and all adore, he took not on him the angelic form, but was made flesh, and found in fashion as a man; like us wretched mortals, he partook of weariness, of pain, and of all our infirmities, sin only excepted, that we might one day be raised to your sublime abodes, be adopted into your blissful society, and join with your transported choir in giving glory to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.*

O ye heavens, whose azure arches rise immensely high, and stretch immeasurably wide! stupendous amphitheatre! amidst whose vast expansive circuit, orbs of the most dreadful grandeur are perpetually running their amazing races; unfathomable depths of ether! where worlds unnumbered float, and to our limited sight worlds unnumbered are lost. He who adjusted your dimensions with a span, and formed the magnificent structure with his word, he was once wrapt up in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger, that the benefits accruing to his people, through his most meritorious humiliation, might have no other measure of their value than immensity; might run parallel in their duration with eternity.

Ye stars that beam with unextinguishable brilliancy through the midnight-sky; oceans of flames, and centres of worlds, though seemingly little points of light, He who shone with essential effulgence, innumerable ages before your twinkling tapers were kindled, and will shine with everlasting majesty and beauty, when your places in the firmament shall be known no more; he was involved many years in the deepest obscurity; lay concealed in the contemptible city of Nazareth; lay disguised under the mean habit of a carpenter's son, that he might plant the

* Rev. v. 13.

heavens* as it were with new constellations, and array these clods of earth, these houses of clay, with a radiancy far superior to yours; a radiancy which will adorn the very heaven of heavens, when you shall vanish away like smoke†, or expire as momentary sparks from the smitten steel.

Comets! that sometimes shoot into the illimitable tracts of ether, farther than the discernment of our eye is able to follow; sometimes return from the long, long excursion, and sweep our affrighted hemisphere with your enormous fiery train; that sometimes make near approaches to the sun, and burn almost in his immediate beams; that sometimes retire to the remotest distance, and freeze for ages in the excessive rigour of winter; he who at his sovereign pleasure withdraws the blazing wonder, or leads forth the portentous strayer to shake terror over guilty kingdoms; he was overwhelmed with the most shocking amazement, and plunged into the deepest anxiety; was chilled with apprehensions of fear, and scorched by the flames of avenging wrath, that I and other depraved rebellious creatures might not be eternally agitated with the extremes of jarring passions; opposite, yet on either side tormenting, far more tormenting to the soul than the severest degrees of your heat and cold to the human sense.

* Isa. li. 16.

† Alluding to a passage in Isaiah, which is, I think, grand and elevated beyond all comparison: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; and they that dwell therein shall die like the feeble insect; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation shall not be abolished." Isa. li., 6.—With the great Vitringa, I translate the words not "in like manner," but, "like the feeble insect," which renders the period more complete, the scene more emphatical, and is more agreeable to the genius of the sacred original.

Ye planets! that winged with imaginable speed, traverse the regions of the sky, sometimes climbing millions of miles above; sometimes descending as far below the great axle of your motions. Ye that are so minutely faithful to the vicissitudes of day and night, so exactly punctual in bringing on the changes of your respective seasons; he who launched you at first from his mighty arm; who continually impels you with such wonderful rapidity, and guides you with such perfect regularity; who fixes "the habitation of his holiness, and his glory" infinite heights above your scanty bounds; he once became a helpless infant, sojourned in our inferior world, fled from the persecutor's sword, and wandered as a vagabond in a foreign land, that he might lead our feet into the way of peace, that he might bring us aliens near to God, bring us exiles home to heaven.

Thou sun! inexhaustible source of light, and heat, and comfort, without whose presence an universal gloom would ensue and horror insupportable; who, without the assistance of any other fire, sheddest day through a thousand realms; and not confining thy munificence to realms only, extendest thy enlightening influences to surrounding worlds. Prime cheerer of the animal, and great enlivener of the vegetable tribes! so beautiful in thyself, so beneficial in thy effects, that erring heathens addressed thee with adorations and mistook thee for thy Maker; He who filled thy orb with a profusion of lustre, lustre in its direct emanations unsufferably bright, but rebated by reflection delightfully mild; he before whom the meridian splendours are but a shade; whose love transfused into the heart, is infinitely more exhilarating than even thy sweet and clear shining after the rain; he divested himself of his all-transcending distinctions, and drew a veil over the effulgence of his divinity, that by speaking to us face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend, he might dispel our intellectual darkness. "His visage was

marred,"* and he became the scorn of men, the outcast of the people; and by this manifestation of his unutterably tender regard for our welfare, he might diffuse many a gleam of joy through our dejected minds; that in another state of things he might clothe even our fallen nature with the honors of that magnificent luminary, and give all the righteous to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Thou moon! that walkest amongst the host of stars, and in thy lucid appearance art superior to them all; fair ruler of the night! sometimes half restoring the day with thy waxing brightness; sometimes waning into dimness, and scarcely scattering the nocturnal gloom; sometimes covered with sackcloth, and alarming the gazing nations: he who dresses thy opaque globe in beaming, but borrowing silver; he whose dignity is unchangeable, underived, and all his own; he vouchsafed to wear a body of clay; he was content to appear as in a bloody eclipse—shorn of his resplendent beams, and surrounded with a night of horror, which knew not one reviving ray. Thus, has he empowered his church to tread the moon under her feet,† and inspired with the hope of brighter glory, of more enduring bliss, to triumph over all the vain anxieties, and vainer amusements of this sublunary, precarious, mutable world.

Ye thunders! that awfully grumbling in the distant clouds, seem to meditate indignation, and form the first essays of a far more frightful peal; or suddenly bursting over our heads, rend the vault above and shake the ground below, with the hideous, horrid crash; ye that send your tremendous vollies from pole to pole, startling the savage herds‡ and astounding the human race; he who permits terror to sound her trumpet in your deep, prolonged, enlarging, aggravated war, he uttered a feeble infantile cry

* Isa. lii. 14. † Rev. xii. 1. ‡ Psalm xxix. 8.

in the stable, and strong expiring groans on the accursed tree, that he might in the gentlest accent whisper peace to our souls, and at length tune our voices to the melody of heaven.

O ye lightnings! that brood and lie couchant in the sulphurous vapours; that glance with forked fury from the angry gloom, swifter and fiercer than the lion rushes from his den; or open into vast expansive sheets of flame, sublimely waved over the prostrate world, and fearfully lingering in the frighted skies; ye that formerly laid in ashes the licentious abodes of lust and violencee; that will, ere long, set on fire the elements, and co-operate in the conflagration of the globe! he who kindles your flash, and directs you when to sally, and where to strike; he who commissions your whirling bolts whom to kill, and whom to spare; he resigned his most sacred person to the most barbarous indignities; submitted his beneficent hands to the ponderous hammer and the piercing nail; yea, withheld not his heart—his very heart—from the stab of the executioner's spear; and instead of flashing confusion on his outrageous tormentors—instead of striking them dead to the earth, or plunging them into the depths of hell with his frown—he cried in his last moments, and with his agonising lips, he cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" O what a pattern of patience for his saints! what an object of admiration for angels! what a constellation of mild, amiable, and benign virtue, shining in this hour of darkness, with ineffable splendour and beauty!* Hence, hence it is, that we are not trem-

* One can hardly forbear animadverting upon the disingenuous temper and perverse taste of Celsus, who attempts to turn this most distinguishing and ornamental part of our Lord's life into ridicule and reproach. Having spoken of Christ as despitefully used, and arrayed in a purple robe; crowned with thorns; and holding, by way of mock majesty,

bling under lightnings of Mount Sinai; that we are not blasted by the flames of divine vengeance; or doomed to dwell with everlasting burnings.

Ye frowning wintry clouds! oceans pendant in the air and burdening the winds! he in whose hand you are an

a reed instead of a sceptre; (for he enters into all these circumstances, which is a testimony to the truth, even from the mouth of an enemy); he adds, " Why, in the name of wonder, does he not, on this occasion at least, act as God? Why does he not deliver himself from this shocking ignominy; or execute some signal vengeance on the authors of such injurious and abusive insults, both of himself and his Father? " Why, Celsus? Because he was meekness and gentleness itself; whereas your deities were slaves to their own turbulent and resentful passions; because they were little better than savages in human shape, who too often made a merit of slaughter, and took a horrid pride in spilling blood: while Christ was the Prince of Peace, and came not to destroy men's lives, but to save. Because any madman on earth, or fury from hell, is capable of venting his rage; but who, amidst such insufferable provocations and barbarities—who, having in his own hand the power to rescue himself, the power to avenge himself—could submit to all with an unruffled serenity of patience, and not only be unexasperated, but overcome, in so triumphant a manner, evil with good? None but Christ! None but Christ! This was compassion worthy of a God! clemency and charity truly divine! Therefore the calumny raised by the same virulent objector in another place, carries its own confutation; or rather falls with a weight of infamy on his dunghill deities; while it bears a most honorable testimony to the majestic and invincible meekness of our Saviour. Says he to the Christian, (ibid p. 404) i. e. " You indeed take upon you to deride the images of our deities; but if Bacchus himself, or Hercules, had been present, you would not have dared to offer such an affront; or if you had been so presumptuous, you would have severely smarted for your insolence. Whereas they who tor-

overflowing scourge, or by whose appointment an arsenal* of warlike stores; he who opens your sluices and a flood gushes forth to destroy the fruits of the earth and drown the husbandman's hopes; who moulds you into frozen balls, and you are shot, linked with death,† on the troops of his enemies; he, instead of discharging the fury of his wrath upon this guilty head, poured out his prayers—poured out his sighs—poured out his very soul for me, and my fellow transgressors, that by virtue of his inestimable propitiation, the overflowings of divine good-will might be extended to sinful men; that the skies might pour down righteousness; and peace with her downy wings, peace with her balmy blessings, descend to dwell on earth.

Ye vernal clouds! furls of finer air, folds of softer moisture! he who draws you in copious exhalations from the briny deep, orders you to leave every distasteful quality behind, and become floating mountains of sweeter waters: he who dissolves you into gentle rain, and dismisses you in fruitful showers; who kindly commissions

mented the very person of your God, and even extended him with mortal agony on the cross, suffered no effects of his displeasure."

* Juvenal seems to consider the clouds under this same character in that beautiful line—

"Quicquid habent telorum armamentaria cœli."

† Job has informed us for what purpose the magazines of the firmament are stocked with hail: "That they may be ready against the day of battle and war." Job xxxviii. 23.—Joshua has recorded what terrible slaughter has been made by these missive weapons of the Almighty. Joshua x. 11.—But the most dreadful description of this great ordnance of the heaven is given us in Rev. xvi. 21. "There fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent."

you to drop down fatness as you fall, and to scatter flowers of the field; he, in the unutterable bitterness of his spirit, was without any comforting sense of his Almighty Father's presence; he, when his bones were burnt up like a fire-brand, had not one drop of that sacred consolation, which on many of his afflicted servants, has been distilled as the evening dews, and has given "songs in the night" of distress; that, from this unallayed and inconsolable anguish of our all gracious Master, we, as from a well of salvation, might derive large draughts of spiritual refreshment.

Thou grand etherial bow! whose beauties flush the firmament, and charm every spectator! he who paints thee on the fluid skirts of the sky, who decks thee with all the pride of colours, and bends thee into that graceful and majestic figure; at whose command thy vivid streaks sweetly rise, or swiftly fade; he, through all his life, was arrayed in the humble garb of poverty, and at his exit wore the gorgeous garment of contempt, insomuch that even his own familiar friends, ashamed, or afraid to own him, "hid, as it were, their faces from him,"* to teach us a becoming disdain for the unsubstantial and transitory glitter of all worldly vanities; to introduce us, in robes brighter than the tinges of thy resplendent arch, even in the robes of his own immaculate righteousness; to introduce us before that august and venerable throne, which the peaceful rainbow surrounds—surrounds as a pledge of inviolable fidelity and infinite mercy.

Ye storms and tempests! which vex the continent, and toss the seas! which dash navies on the rocks, and drive forests from their roots! he whose breath rouses you into

* Isaiah, liii. 3. Fuit tanquam aliquis, a quo quisque faciem occultaret. He was as some flagitious and abandoned wretch, from whom every one, disdaining such a character, and disclaiming such an acquaintance, studiously hid his face.

such resistless fury, and whose nod controls you in your wildest career; he who holds the rapid and raging hurricane in straitened reins, and walks dreadfully serene on the very wings of the wind; he went, all meek and gentle as a lamb, to the slaughter for us; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. Thus we are instructed to bear, with decent magnanimity, the various assaults of adversity, and to pass, with a becoming tranquillity of temper, through the ruder blasts of injurious treatment; thus we are delivered from the unutterably fiercer storms of incensed and inexorable justice, from the "fire, the brimstone, and the horrible tempest, which will be the final portion of the ungodly."

Thou pestilence!* that scatterest ten thousand poisons from thy baleful wings, tainting the air, and infecting the nations! under whose malignant influence joy is blasted, and nature sickens, mighty regions are depopulated, and once crowded cities are left without inhabitants! he who arms thee with inevitable destruction, and bids thee march before his angry countenance, to spread desolation among the tents of the wicked, and be the forerunner of far more fearful indignation; he, in his holy humanity, was arraigned as a criminal, and though innocence itself, yea, the very pattern of perfection, was condemned to die like the most execrable miscreant, as a nuisance to society, and the very bane of the public happiness; he was hurried away to execution, and hammered to the gibbet; that by his blood he might prepare a sovereign medicine to cure us of a more fatal distemper than the pestilence which walketh in darkness, or the sickness which destroyeth at noon-day; that he might himself say to our last enemy, "O death, I will be thy plague! O grave, I will be thy destruction!"†

* Before him went the pestilence.—Hab. iii. 5.

† Hosea xiii. 14.

Heat! whose burning influence parches the Libyan wilds, tans into soot the Ethiopian's complexion, and makes every species of life pant, and droop, and languish! Cold! whose icy breath glazes yearly the Russian seas, often glues the frozen sailor to the cordage, and stiffens the traveller into a statue of rigid flesh; he who sometimes blends you both, and produces the most agreeable temperature, sometimes suffers you to act separately, and rage with intolerable severity; that king of heaven, and controller of universal nature, when dwelling in a tabernacle of clay, was exposed to chilling damps, and smitten by sultry beams; the stars, in their midnight watches, heard him pray, and the sun, in his meridian fervours, saw him toil! Hence are our frozen hearts dissolved into a mingled flow of wonder, love, and joy, being conscious of a deliverance from those insufferable flames, which, kindled by divine indignation, burn to the lowest hell.

Thou ocean! vast world of waters! he who sunk that capacious bed for thy reception, and poured the liquid element into unfathomable channels; before whom all thy foaming billows, and floating mountains, are as the small drop of a bucket; who, by the least intimation of his will, swells thy fluid kingdoms in wild confusion, to mingle with the clouds, or reduces them, in calm composure, to slumber on the shores; he who once gave thee a warrant to overwhelm the whole earth, and bury all its degenerate inhabitants in a watery grave, but has now laid an everlasting embargo on thy boisterous waves, and bound thee, all fierce and maddening as thou art, in chains stronger than adamant, yet formed of despicable sand; all the waves of vengeance, and wrath of tribulation and anguish passed over his crucified body, and his agonizing soul, that we might emerge from those depths of misery, from that abyss of guilt, into which we are plunged by Adam's fall, and more irretrievably sunk by our own

transgressions; that at the last, we might be restored to that happy world, which is represented in the vision of God, as having no sea,* to denote its perpetual stability, and undisturbed serenity.

Ye mountains! that overlook the clouds, and project a shade into distant provinces! everlasting pyramids of nature, not to be shattered by the bolts of thunder, nor impaired even by the ravages of time! he who bids your ridges rise so high, and your foundations stand so fast; he in whose scale you are lighter than dust, in whose eyes you are less than nothing; he sunk beneath a load of woes—woes insupportable, but not his own, when he took our iniquities upon himself, and heaved the more than mountainous burden from a guilty world.

Ye verdant woods! that crown the hills, and are crowned yourselves with leafy honors! ye humble shrubs! adorned in spring with opening blossoms, and fanned in summer by gentle gales! ye that in distant climes, or cultivated gardens, breathe out spicy odours, and embalm the air with delightful perfumes! your all-glorious and ever-blessed creator's head was encircled with a thorny wreath; his face was defiled with contumelious spitting, and his body bathed in a bloody sweat; that we might wear the crown—the crown of glory, which fadeth not away; and live for evermore, surrounded with delights, as much surpassing yours, as yours exceed the rugged desolations of winter.

Thou mantling vine! he who hangs on thy slender shoots the rich, transparent, weighty cluster; who, under thy unornamented foliage, and amidst the pores of thy otherwise worthless bough, prepares the liquor, the refined and exalted liquor, which cheers the nations, and fills the cup of joy: trees! whose branches are elevated and waving in air, or diffused, in easy confinement, along

* Rev. xxi. 1.

a sunny wall; he who bends you with a lovely burden of delicious fruits, whose genial warmth beautifies their rind and mellows their taste; he, when voluntarily subject to our wants, instead of being refreshed with your generous juices, or regaled with your luscious pulp, had a loathsome potion of vinegar, mixed with gall, addressed to his lips, that we might sit under the shadow of his merits with great tranquillity and the utmost complacency, that ere long, being admitted into the paradise of God, we might eat of the tree of life,* and drink new wine with him, in his Father's kingdom.

Ye luxuriant meadows! he who, without the seedsman's industry, replenishes your irriguous lap with never-failing crops of herbage, and enamels their cheerful green with flowers of every hue; ye fertile fields! he who blesses the labours of the husbandman, enriches your well-tilled plains with waving harvests, and calls forth the staff of life from your furrows; he who causes both meadows and fields to laugh and sing for the abundance of plenty; he was no stranger to corroding hunger and parching thirst; he, alas! ate the bitter bread of woe, and had "plenteousness of tears to drink," that we might partake of richer dainties than those which are produced by the dews of heaven, and proceed from the fatness of the earth; that we might feed on "the hidden manna," and eat the bread which giveth life—eternal life, unto the world.

Ye mines! rich in golden ore, or bright with veins of silver! that distribute your shining treasures as far as the winds can waft the vessels of commerce; which bestow your alms on monarchs, and have princes for your pensioners: ye beds of gems! toy-shops of nature! which form, in dark retirement, the glittering stone; diamonds, that sparkle with a brilliant water; rubies, that glow

* Rev. ii. 7.

with a crimson flame; emeralds, dipped in the freshest verdure of spring; sapphires, decked in the fairest drapery of the sky; topaz, emblazed with dazzling yellow; amethyst, impurpled with the blushes of the morning; he who tinctures the metallic dust, and consolidates the lucid drop; he, when sojourning on earth, had no riches but the riches of disinterested benevolence, had no ornament but the ornament of unspotted purity. Poor he was in his circumstances, and mean in all his accommodations, that we might be rich in grace, and "obtain salvation with eternal glory;" that we might inhabit the New Jerusalem, that splendid city, whose streets are paved with gold, whose gates are formed of pearl, and the walls garnished with all manner of precious stones.*

Ye gushing fountains! that trickle potable silver through the matted grass; ye fine transparent streams! that glide in crystal waves along your fringed banks; ye deep and stately rivers! that wind and wander in your course, to spread your favors wider; that gladden kingdoms in your progress, and augment the sea with your tribute; he who supplies all your currents, from his own overflowing and inexhaustible liberality; he, when his nerves were racked with exquisite pain, and his blood inflamed by a raging fever, cried, *I thirst!* and was denied (unparalleled hardship), in this great extremity, was denied the poor refreshment of a single drop of water, that we, having all-sufficiency in all things, might abound in every good work; might be filled with the fulness of spiritual blessings here, and hereafter be satisfied with that fulness of joy which is at God's right hand for evermore.

Ye birds! cheerful tenants of the boughs! gaily dressed in glossy plumage, who wake the morn, and solace the groves with your artless lays; inimitable architects! who without rule or line, build your pensile structures with all the nicety

* Rev. xxi. 18, 21.

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of proportion, you have each his commodious nest, roofed with shades, and lined with warmth to protect and cherish the callow brood; but he who tuned your throats to harmony, and taught you that curious skill, he was a man of sorrows, and had not where to lay his head, till he felt the pangs of dissolution, and was laid in the silent grave; that we dwelling under the wings of Omnipotence, and resting in the bosom of infinite love, might spend an harmonious eternity in "singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb."

Bees! industrious workmen, that sweep with busy wing the flowery garden, and search the blooming heath, and sip the mellifluous dews; strangers to idleness, that ply with incessant assiduity your pleasing task, and suffer no opening blossom to pass unexplored, no sunny gleam to slip away unimproved; most ingenious artificers, that cling to the fragrant buds, drain them of their treasured sweet, and extract (if I may so speak) even the odoriferous souls of herbs, and plants, and flowers; you, when you have completed your work, have collected, refined, and securely lodged the ambrosial stores, when you might reasonably expect the peaceful fruition of your acquisitions, you, alas! are barbarously destroyed, and leave your hoarded delicacies to others—leave them to be enjoyed by your very murderers, I cannot but pity your hard destiny. How then should my bowels melt with sympathy, and my eyes flow with tears,* when I remember that thus, thus it fares with your, and our incarnate Maker. After a life of the most exemplary and exalted piety, a life filled with offices of benevolence, and labours of love; he was by wicked hands crucified and slain; he left the honey of his toil, the balm of his blood, and the riches of his obedience to be shared among others, to be shared

* Canst thou, ungrateful man, his torments see,
Nor drop a tear for Him, who poured his blood for thee?
PITT'S POEMS.

even among those who too often crucify him afresh, and put him to open shame. Shall I mention the animal which spins her soft, her shining, her exquisitely fine silken thread; whose matchless manufactures lend an ornament to grandeur, and make royalty itself more magnificent? Shall I take notice of the cell in which, when the gaiety and business of life are over, the little recluse immures herself, and spends the remainder of her days in retirement? Shall I rather observe the sepulchre which, when cloyed with pleasure, and weary of the world, she prepares for her own interment, or how, when a stated period is elapsed, she wakes from a death-like inactivity; breaks the inclosure of her tomb; throws off the dusky shroud; assumes a new form; puts on a more sumptuous array, and, from an insect creeping on the ground, becomes a winged inhabitant of the air? No, this is a poor reptile, and unworthy to serve such an illustration, when any character of the Son of God comes under consideration. But let me correct myself. Was not Christ (to use the language of his own blessed spirit) a worm, and no man? In appearance such, and treated as such, did not he also bequeath the fine linen to his own most perfect righteousness, to compose the marriage garment for our disarrayed and defiled souls? Did he not, before his flesh saw corruption, emerge triumphant from the grave, and not only mount the lower firmament, but ascend the heaven of heavens, taking possession of those sublime abodes in our name, and as our forerunner?

Ye cattle that rest in your inclosed pastures; ye beasts that range the unlimited forests; ye fish that rove through trackless paths of the sea; sheep, clad in garments, which when left by you, are worn by kings; kine, who feed on verdure, which transmuted in your bodies, and strained from your udders, furnish a repast for queens; lions, roaring after your prey; leviathan, taking your pastime in the great deep; with all that wing the firmament, or tread the

soil, or swim the wave; he who spreads your ever hospitable board; who admits you all to be his continual guests, and suffers you to want no manner of thing that is good; he was destitute, afflicted, tormented; he endured all that was miserable and reproachful, in order to exalt a degenerate race, who had debased themselves to a level with the beasts that perish, unto seats of distinguished and immortal honor; in order to introduce the slaves of sin, and heirs of hell, into mansions of consummate and everlasting bliss.

Surely the contemplation of such a subject, and the distant anticipation of such a hope, may almost turn earth into heaven, and make even inanimate nature vocal with praise. Let it then break forth from every creature! Let the meanest feel the inspiring impulse: let the greatest acknowledge themselves unable, worthily to express the stupendous goodness.

Praise him, ye insects, that crawl upon the ground! who, though high above all height, humbled himself to dwell in dust.

Birds of the air! waft on your wings, and warble in your notes his praise, who, though Lord of the celestial abodes, while sojourning on earth, wanted a shelter commodious as your nests. Ye rougher world of brutes! join with the gentle songsters of the shade, and howl to him your hoarse applause, who breaks the jaw bone of the infernal lion, who softens into mildness the savage disposition, and bids the wolf lie down in amicable agreement with the lamb. Bleat out, ye hills! let broader lows be responsive from the vales; ye forests catch, and ye rocks retain the inarticulate hymn; because Messiah, the Prince, feeds his flock like a shepherd; he gathers his lambs with his arm, he carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young.* Wave, ye stately cedars! in sign of worship,

* Isa. xl. 11.

wave your branching heads to him, who meekly bowed his own on the accursed tree. Pleasing prospects! scenes of beauty! where nicest art conspires with lavish nature to form a paradise below, lay forth all your charms, and in all your charms confess yourselves a mere blank, compared with his amiableness "who is the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." Drop down, ye showers! and testify as you fall, testify of his grace which descends more copiously than the rain, distils more sweetly than the dew. Let sighing gales breathe! and murmuring rivulets flow; breathe and flow in harmonious consonance, to him whose Spirit is far more reviving than the cooling breeze—who is himself the fountain of living waters.

Ye lightnings, blaze to his honor! ye thunders sound to his praise! while reverberating clouds return the roar, and bellowing oceans propagate the tremendous anthem. Mutest of creatures! add your silent oratory, and display the triumphs of his meekness, who, though he maketh the clouds his chariot, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea; though the thunder is his voice, and the lightnings his sword of justice; yet amidst the most abusive and cruel injuries, was submissive, and lifted not his hand—was "dumb and opened not his mouth." Great source of day! address thy radiant homage to a far sublimer sun; write, in all thy ample round, with every lucid beam—O! write a testimony to him, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, who is the Sun of Righteousness to the sinful world, and is risen never to go down—is risen to be an everlasting light.

Shine clear, ye skies! look gay, thou earth! let the floods clap their hands, and let every creature wear a smile! for He cometh, the Creator himself cometh to be manifested in the flesh; and with him comes pardon, peace, and joy—every virtue, and all felicity comes in his train. Angels and archangels! let your songs be of Jesus, and teach the very heavens to echo with his adored and ma-

jestic name. Ye beheld him with greater transports of admiration, when you attended his agony in the garden and saw him lie prostrate upon the ground, than when you beheld universal nature rising at his call, and saw the wonders of his creating might. Tune to loftiest notes your golden harps, and waken raptures unknown before, even in heavenly breasts; while all that has breath swells the concert of harmony, and all that has being unites in the tribute of praise. Chiefly let man exalt his voice! let man, with distinguished hosannas, hail the Redeemer. For man he was stretched on the racking cross; for man he was consigned to the gloomy sepulchre; for man he procured grace immeasurable, and bliss inconceivable. However different, therefore, in your age, or more different in your circumstances, be unanimous, O man, in magnifying a Saviour who is no respecter of persons—who gave himself a ransom for all. Bend, ye kings! from your thrones of ivory and gold, in your robes of imperial purple, —fall prostrate at his feet, who forsook a nobler throne, and laid aside more illustrious ensigns of majesty, that you might reign with God for ever and ever. Children of poverty! meanest of mortals! (if any can be called poor who are thus enriched, if any can be accounted mean who are thus ennobled); rejoice, greatly rejoice in God your Saviour, who chose to be indigent, was willing to be contemned, that you might be entitled to the treasures, and be numbered with the princes of heaven. Sons of affliction! though harrassed with pain and inured to anguish, O change your groans into songs of gratitude; let no complaining voice, no jarring string be heard in the universal symphony; but glorify the Lamb even in the fires,* who himself bore greater torment than you feel, and has promised you a share of the joy which he inherits; who has made your sufferings short, and will make your rest eternal. Men of

* Isa. xxiv. 15.

hoary locks! bending beneath a weight of years and tottering on the brink of the grave, let Christ be your support under all infirmities; lean upon Christ as the rock of your salvation; let his name, his precious name, form the last accents which quiver on your pale expiring lips. And let this be the first that lisps on your tongues, ye tender infants! Remember your Redeemer in your earliest moments; devote the choicest of your hours to the learning of his will, and the chief of your strength to the glorifying of his name, who, in the perfection of health, and the very prime of manhood, was content to become a motionless and ghastly corpse, that you might be girt with the vigour, and clothed with the bloom of eternal youth.

Ye spirits of just men made perfect! who are released from the burden of the flesh, and freed from all the vexatious solicitations of corruption in yourselves, delivered from all the injurious effects of iniquity in others; who sojourn no longer in the tents of strife, or the territories of disorder; but are received into that pure, harmonious, holy society, where every one acts up to his amiable and exalted character—where God himself is pleased graciously and immediately to preside: you find, not without pleasing astonishment, your hopes improved into actual enjoyment, and your faith superseded by the beatific vision; you feel all your former shyness of behaviour happily lost in the overflowing of unbounded love; and all your little differences of opinion entirely borne down by tides of invariable truth. Bless, therefore, with all your enlarged powers, bless his infinitely larger goodness, who, when he had overcome the sharpness of death, opened the gates of paradise, opened the kingdom of heaven to all generations, and to every denomination of the faithful.

Ye men of holy conversation and humble tempers! think of him who loves you, and washed you from your sins in his own blood; think of him on your silent couch; talk of him in every social interview; glory in his excel-

lencies, make your boast of his obedience; and add, still continue to add, the incense of a dutiful life, to all the oblations of a grateful tongue. Weakest of believers! who go mourning under a sense of guilt, and conflicting with the ceaseless assaults of temptation, put off your sackcloth, and be girded with gladness, because Jesus is as merciful to hear, as he is mighty to help; because he is touched with the tenderest sympathizing concern for all your distresses; and he lives, ever lives, to be our advocate with the Father. Why then should uneasy doubts sadden your countenance? Why should desponding fears oppress your soul? Turn, turn these disconsolate sighs into cheerful hymns, since you have his powerful intercession, and his inestimable merits, to be your anchor in all tribulations—to be your passport into eternal blessedness.

Most of all, ye ministers of the sanctuary! heralds commissioned from above! lift every one his voice like a trumpet, and loudly proclaim the Redeemer. Get ye up, ye ambassadors of peace, get ye up into the high mountains, and spread far and wide the honors of the Lamb "that was slain, but is alive for evermore." Teach every sacred roof to resound with his fame, and every human heart to glow with his love. Declare, as far as the force of words will go, declare the inexhaustible fulness of that great atonement, whose merits are commensurate with the glories of the Divinity. Tell the sinful wretch, that pity yearns in Immanuel's bowels; what blood he has spilt—what agonies he has endured—what wonders he has wrought, for the salvation of his enemies. Invite the indigent to become rich; intreat the guilty to accept of pardon; because with the crucified Jesus is plenteous redemption, and all-sufficiency to save. While you, placed in conspicuous stations, pour the joyful sound, may I, as I steal through the vale of humble life, catch the pleasing accents. For me, the Author of all blessings became a curse; for me his bones were dislocated, and

his flesh was torn. He hung, with streaming veins and agonizing soul, on the cross, for me! O! may I, in my little sphere, and amidst the scanty circle of my acquaintance, at least whisper these glad transporting tidings; whisper them from my own heart, that they may surely reach, and sweetly penetrate theirs.

But when men and angels raise the grand hymn; when all worlds, and all beings, add their collective acclamations; this full, fervent, and universal chorus, will be so inferior to the riches of the Redeemer's grace—so disproportionate to the magnitude of his glory—that it will seem but to debase the unutterable subject it attempts to exalt,—the loud hallelujah will die away in the solemn, mental eloquence of prostrate, rapturous, silent adoration!

O goodness infinite! goodness immense! and love that passeth knowledge! Words are vain. Language is lost in wonders so divine,—

"Come then, expressive *silence*, muse his praise!"

If irrational and inanimate creation declare the glory of God, then why not man? Would I dare to shrink in my duty for worldly gain? Would I fear, for mortal frown, to soften truth? No. Then the poet says—

Shall I, for fear of feeble man,
The Spirit's course in me restrain?
Or undismay'd in deed and word,
Be a true witness for my Lord?

Aw'd by a mortal's frown, shall I
Conceal the word of God most high?
How then before thee, shall I dare
To stand, or how thine anger bear?

Shall I, to soothe th' unholy throng,
Soften thy truth, and smooth my tongue?
To gain earth's gilded toys, or flee
The cross, endur'd, my Lord, by thee?

What then is he whose scorn I dread?
Whose wrath or hate makes me afraid?
A man! an heir of death! a slave
To sin! a bubble on the wave!

SECONDLY.—It would be an interesting question for the consideration of a Unitarian, what is it that constitutes the inspiration of the Bible? It is not merely its *truth;* for there are many works both on history, philosophy, and divinity, which, though strictly true, do not claim on that account any portion of inspiration. It is not merely the grandeur of its language, or the beauty of its descriptions; a strong mind, and a vivid imagination might accomplish this without any *extraordinary* divine influence. It is not because it describes the rise, corruption, and future state of man, that it is divine; tradition might teach the first, experience the second, and reason might, (as it has done in other instances,) form some opinion of the latter. It is not because it relates prophecies which were afterwards accomplished; we have in prophane history accounts of extraordinary predictions, but the history which relates them is not therefore divine. What then constitutes the inspiration of the Bible, and distinguishes it from all other works, however vivid in description, however true in their narratives?

We suppose the acknowledged belief of the inspiration of the scriptures to be true; and therefore need not stop to prove what is to both parties a common doctrine. According to this opinion, the Bible is the work of God; that is, it has God for its author. Now in perusing the writing of a *human* author, what is it that we expect? We look in that writing to find the *wisdom* of the writer; we examine it, as affording *a view of the ideas and thoughts* of the author, and as far as words can do it, exhibiting an image of his mind. But as the mind of man is imperfect, and continually pervious to error, so his work, however

correct, as exhibiting his ideas to others, must be imperfect likewise, and can never claim, for either itself or its author the attribute of infallible truth.

If then the writing of a *man*, exhibits the mind and wisdom of man, the book of which God is the author, must contain within it the mind and wisdom of God. But this wisdom and this mind are *infinite.* The wisdom *of the Bible* must therefore be infinite. Though the knowledge of the Deity is in strict agreement with reason, because he himself is eternal reason, yet the reasoning power of man can penetrate but a very little way into its "depths," can take in a very small part of its extent. The scriptures therefore which contain this knowledge must, like it, be infinite in their depth of wisdom, infinite in their extent of application; and though never opposed to reason, because proceeding from reason itself, yet in many instances too deep for the imperfect faculty of man, too wide for his finite comprehension.

Here then perhaps we may see how the word of God differs from all human compositions. These are the transcript of imperfect minds; that is the image of him who is the source of all perfection. These exhibit only the fallible ideas of a creature, subject to error and liable to mistake; that sets forth to view the infinite ideas of an infinite God. In the one there is wisdom, but it may be comprehended, because *finite;* in the other there are incomprehensible depths of wisdom, because that wisdom is infinite. The Bible therefore differs as far from all other works, as perfection differs from imperfection, as finite differs from infinite, as God differs from a creature.

But reason, it has been said, is that by which the Bible must be judged. This we deny. Reason is the eye of the mind; it is that faculty by which we perceive and form an opinion, not with the *dicta* of a judge, but with the docility of a learner. As well might we assert that the disciple is the judge of his teacher, as that human reason is the

judge of the bible. It is certain that reason, though a powerful faculty, is, considered *in itself*, inactive. As the eye can only act when light is communicated, and is without light incapable of action, so reason can only exercise itself when truth is given, and without truth is useless and inert. But the eye forms not its own light, nor does reason produce its own truth. It can indeed receive truth when it is given, but that truth itself springs from another source, and is derived from "the Father of Lights," the uncreated *Sun* of Righteousness.

Now the grand medium, by which divine truth is communicated to the mental eye, is the word of God. And through the natural images of natural things, *spiritual* things are impressed upon the mind. In the visible world, the atmosphere which is connected with, and which surrounds the earth, receives in itself the image of the sun, and transmits that image to the natural eye. Thus, though not connected immediately with the sun, it becomes the medium by which the solar light is given, and by which the eye is enabled to discern the objects around. In the same manner, human language and natural objects with which man is familiar, are in the scriptures the *atmosphere*, which receives in itself the light of God, and communicates that light to the mind. Though not connected immediately with the divine mind, but proceeding from *human ideas*, and material forms, yet they become the medium by which the truth of heaven is infused into the mind, and by which reason is enabled to put itself into exercise.

Is the eye then the judge of light? It can decide upon objects, when light is given; but it can never decide upon that which gives it the power of decision. Is reason the judge of divine truth? It can judge of things by the power of truth, but it cannot judge that which is the source of its power. Yet reason is not contrary to truth, any more than the eye is contrary to light, the one is fitted to receive and act by the other. It is possible however that

light may exist in that state of brilliancy, that the eye may be incapable of receiving it, and it may then produce blindness instead of sight; and so also it is true, that the divine wisdom is *in itself* far too bright for the reception of reason, and when this faculty is exercised upon subjects beyond the comprehension of man, it becomes "darkened by excess of light," and runs into error, through the overpowering influence of truth itself.

Thus there are doctrines in the word of God, which, when received as laid down, and acted upon, produce faith, and enlighten the mind, but which when approached too nearly, dazzle and perplex, not because they are erroneous, but because they are divine. The man then who, because he cannot fully receive and comprehend a doctrine, because it puzzles his mind, and distracts his reason, declares that such doctrine is false, is like one who gazing till his sight becomes dim at the meridian sun, insists that darkness and not light proceeds from his beams. Let it be remembered however, that I by no means plead for doctrines which are opposed to reason, and which contradict it, but for those which are above it, and beyond its power. That which is false in reason, can never be true in scripture, but a doctrine may be incomprehensible, and still be true.

It is not, then, the mere narrative of the scriptures, (the concerns of the Jewish nation—the actions of their kings and the extent of their conquests,) that is interesting to us, but the things which these events signify, and which they are intended to communicate. The words which are spoken through the divine spirit, are not merely relations of natural things, but they are spiritual and living forms, embodied in natural language; and in this sense, while the "letter killeth, the spirit giveth life."

If the word of God is divine, it is divine in *every part;* for if it is not divine in each *iota*, then it is not all divine, and consequently it is not all to be depended upon. If

every book is divine, if each distinct book is, according to the apostle, "God-breathed," then that breath of God which fills each book, must fill each chapter of which the book is composed, and each verse contained in the chapter, and each sentence contained in each verse. Nay, I might go further, if each *verse* is "breathed into by God," and each sentence divine, then every word in every sentence must be divine likewise, and even every letter which forms every word! That which fills the whole must fill all *the parts*, and that which does not fill every part, does not fill the whole.

Reason then having received the scriptures, must decide *by* the scriptures; they are the *light* by which it must discern truth, they are the Judge, to whose authority every doctrine must be made to bend. "To the law, and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

CHAPTER III.

FIRST: FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS, AN ANCIENT JEW, AND A STRICT OBSERVER OF THE LAW OF MOSES, ADMITS OF CHRIST IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:—"ABOUT THIS TIME, JESUS, A WISE MAN, (IF IT BE LAWFUL TO CALL HIM A MAN), FOR HE WAS A DOER OF WONDERFUL WORKS."—SECOND: OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR'S PROPHECY RELATING TO THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.—THIRD: ALSO THE SIGNS AND WONDERS IN THE HEAVENS, AND IN THE TEMPLE.

HOLY and righteous art thou, O Lord, and with great condescension in mercy thou bowedst the heavens and camedst down into our nature; neither didst thou repine in

leaving the heavenly mansion, that splendid throne which thou occupiedst from all eternity.

Gaze, O my soul, at this amazing love, and value thyself more than the grovelling insect beneath thy feet; assert thy superior privilege—be wise, and wonder; Christians may well admire our great patron, the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostles being followers in his ministry for the revelation of the truth, gave testimony thereunto; even in the antiquities of the Jews, Flavius Josephus, a strict observer of the law of Moses, admits of more than modern Jews and Socinians. In the eighteenth book, and third chapter, Josephus makes the following liberal remarks, in speaking of the sedition of the Jews against Pontius Pilate: "But now Pilate, the procurator of Judea, removed the army from Cesarea to Jerusalem, to take their winter quarters there, in order to abolish the Jewish laws, so he introduced Cæsar's effigies, which were upon the ensigns, and brought them into the city; whereas our law forbids us the very making of images; on which account the former procurators were wont to make their entry into the city with such ensigns as had not those ornaments. Pilate was the first who brought those images to Jerusalem, and set them up there, which was done without the knowledge of the people, because it was done in the night-time; but as soon as they knew it, they came in multitudes to Cesarea, and interceded with Pilate many days, that he would remove the images; and when he would not grant their requests, because it would tend to the injury of Cæsar, while yet they persevered in their request, on the sixth day he ordered his soldiers to have their weapons privately, while he came and sat upon his judgment-seat, which seat was so prepared in the open place in the city, that it concealed the army that lay ready to oppress them; and when the Jews petitioned him again, he gave a signal to the soldiers to encompass them round, and threatened that their punishment should be no less than immediate

death, unless they would leave off disturbing him, and go their ways home; but they threw themselves upon the ground, and laid their necks bare, and said they would take their death very willingly, rather than the wisdom of their laws should be transgressed; upon which Pilate was deeply affected with their firm resolution to keep their laws inviolable, and presently commanded the images to be carried back from Jerusalem to Cesarea." But Pilate undertook to bring a current of water to Jerusalem, and did it with the sacred money, and derived the origin of the stream from the distance of two hundred furlongs; however the Jews* were not pleased with what had been

* These Jews, as they are here called, whose blood Pilate shed on this occasion, may very well be those very Galilean Jews, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. Luke xiii. 1, 2.—These tumults being usually excited at some of the Jews' great festivals, when they slew abundance of sacrifices, and the Galileans being commonly much more busy in such tumults than those of Judea and Jerusalem, as we learn from the History of Archelaus, Antiq. b. xvii., ch. ix., sect. 3, and ch. x., sect. 2, 9; though, indeed, Josephus's present copies say not one word of those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, which the fourth verse of the twelfth chapter of St. Luke informs us of; but since our gospel teaches us (Luke xxiii., 6, 7,) that "when Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether Jesus was a Galilean? and as soon as he knew that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod;" and verse 12, "The same day, Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before, they had been at enmity between themselves." Take the very probable key of this matter, in the words of the learned Noldius de Herod, No. 229, "the cause of the enmity between Herod and Pilate (says he) seems to have been this, that Pilate had intermedled with the tetrarch's jurisdiction, and had slain some of his Galilean subjects, (Luke xiii. 1); and as he was willing to correct that error, he sent Christ to Herod at this time."

done about this water, and many ten thousands of the people got together, and made a clamour against him, and insisted that he should leave off that design. Some of them had used reproaches, and abused the man, as crowds of such people usually do, so he habited a great number of his soldiers in their habit, who carried daggers under their garments, and sent them to the place where they might surround them. So he bid the Jews himself go away, but they boldly casting reproaches upon him, he gave the soldiers that signal which had been beforehand agreed upon, who laid upon them with much greater blows than Pilate had commanded them, and equally punished those that were tumultuous, and those that were not, nor did they spare them in the least; and since the people were unarmed, and were caught by men prepared for what they were about, there were a great number of them slain by this means, and others of them ran away wounded, and thus an end was put to this sedition.

"Now there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man, (if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works), a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure; he drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles; he was the Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross,* those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day,† as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct to this day."

The Jewish church, consisting only of a single nation, and living under a theocracy, or the immediate government of God, experienced continual interpositions, of a particular extraordinary providence in its favor and pro-

* A. D. 33, April 3. † April 5.

tection, and was, from time to time, instructed by prophets, raised up and sent one after another, as occasion required. But the Christian church being designed to comprehend the whole world, was, like the world, at first erected by miracle; but, like the world too, is since governed by a general ordinary providence, by established laws, and the mediation of second causes. This difference in the nature and constitution of the two churches, is the reason why prophecies, and miracles, and other supernatural powers, which were continued so long, and repeated so frequently, in the Jewish church, were, in the Christian church, confined to the first ages, and limited chiefly to the persons of our blessed Saviour, and his disciples, and their companions. There were "prophets," (Acts, xi. 27,) who "came from Jerusalem unto Antioch." "One of them, named Agabus," (verse 28) foretells the "great dearth which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar." The same prophet foretold, likewise (Acts, xxi. 10, 11) the bonds and imprisonment of St. Paul. Philip the evangelist had also (ver. 9) "four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy." Prophetic as well as other spiritual gifts abounded in the primitive church: their "sons and their daughters did prophesy (Acts, ii. 17); their young men saw visions, and their old men dreamed dreams." But the only prophecies which the Spirit of God hath thought fit to record and preserve, are some delivered by our blessed Saviour himself, and by his apostles, particularly St. Paul and St. John. Our blessed Saviour, as he was the great subject of prophecy, so was an illustrious prophet himself; as he excelled in all other spiritual gifts and graces, so was eminent in this also, and gave ample proofs of his divine commission, by his prophecies, as well as by his miracles. What he said upon one occasion, is equally applicable to all his predictions, that their accomplishment is a sufficient attestation of his being the Messiah (John, xiii. 19), "Now I tell you before it come,

that when it come to pass, ye may believe that I am he." He foretold not only his own passion, death, and resurrection, but also the manner and circumstances of them, that he should be betrayed by one of the twelve, even by Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon; that all the rest should be offended because of him that very night, and notwithstanding their protestations to the contrary, should forsake him and fly; that Peter particularly, who was more zealous and eager than the rest, before the cock crew twice, should deny him thrice; that he should be betrayed to the chief priests, and be delivered to the Gentiles, to mock, and to scourge, to spit upon, and to kill him; that he should be crucified, and the third day should rise again, and appear to his disciples in Galilee. He foretold that his apostles should be enabled, of plain fishers, to become fishers of men; that they should be endued with power from on high, to speak with new tongues, and to work miracles; that they should go forth into all nations, and publish the glad tidings of the gospel unto the uttermost parts of the earth. He foretold the persecutions and sufferings which his disciples should undergo; and particularly by what manner of death Peter, in his old age, should glorify God, and that John should survive till after the destruction of Jerusalem. He foretold the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles; that the kingdom of heaven should be taken away from the former and be given to the latter, who would bring forth the fruits thereof; that the number of his disciples, from small beginnings, should increase wonderfully, as a little seed groweth into a tree, and a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; that his church should be so founded upon a rock, that it should stand for ever, and all the powers of hell should not prevail against it. These things were most of them contrary to all human appearances, and impossible to be foreseen by human prudence, or effected by human power; and he must be thoroughly acquainted

with the arts of men, and with the direction and disposition of future events, who could foretell them with such certainty and exactness, and some of them are actually accomplishing in the world at this present time.

But none of our Saviour's prophecies are more remarkable than those relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, as none are more proper and pertinent to the design of these discourses; and we will consider them as they lie in the 24th chapter of St. Matthew, taking in also what is superadded by the other evangelists, upon parallel occasions. These prophecies were delivered by our Saviour about forty years, and were committed to writing, by St. Matthew, about thirty years, before they were to take effect. St. Matthew's is universally allowed to be the first of the four gospels; the first in time, as it is always placed the first in order. It was written, as most writers affirm, in the eighth year after the ascension of our Saviour: it must have been written before the dispersion of the apostles, because St. Bartholomew is said to have taken it along with him into India, and to have left it there; it was found several years after, by Pantænus. If the general tradition of antiquity be true, that it was written originally in Hebrew, it certainly was written before the destruction of Jerusalem; for there was no occasion for writing in that language after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews into all nations. It is asserted upon good authority, that the gospels of Mark and Luke were approved and confirmed, the one by St. Peter and the other by St. Paul. So Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, and Clemens Alexandrinus, say expressly, that the gospel of St. Mark was written at the desire of the new converts, and ratified by St. Peter. So Origen affirms, that the second gospel is that of St. Mark, who wrote as Peter dictated to him; and the third gospel is St. Luke, which is commended by Paul. So Tertullian saith, that Mark's gospel is af-

firmed to be Peter's, whose interpreter Mark was; and Luke's gospel they are wont to ascribe to Paul; so Jerome saith, that the gospel according to Mark, who was the disciple and interpreter of Peter, is said to be Peter's. These authorities are more than sufficient to weigh down the single testimony of Irenaeus to the contrary; but besides these, Gregory Nazianzan, Athanasius, and other fathers might be alleged to prove, that the gospels of Mark and Luke received the approbation, the one of St. Peter, the other of St. Paul; and it is very well known that both these apostles suffered martyrdom under Nero. The gospel of St. Mark must have been written at latest in the reign of Nero, "for he died in that reign, in the eighth year of Nero," according to Jerome. The gospel of St. Luke was written before the Acts of the Apostles, as appears from the preface to the latter; and the Acts of the Apostles concluding with St. Paul's dwelling at Rome two years, it is probable that this book was written soon after that time, and before the death of St. Paul. It may be concluded then as certain, that three of the four gospels were written and published before the destruction of Jerusalem; Dr. Lardner himself, who fixed the time of writing the three first gospels later than most other authors, yet maintains that they were all published some years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and in all probability, the writers themselves were dead before that period; St. Matthew and St. Mark were certainly so; and consequently it cannot, with any colour of reason, be pretended that the predictions were written after the events. St. John is the only evangelist who lived and wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem; and he purposely omits these prophecies, to prevent this very cavil, as we may suppose with reason. Neither can it be pretended that these predictions were interpolations made afterwards, because they are inserted in several places, and woven into the very substance of the gospels; and because they are

cited and alluded to by ancient writers, as well as other parts; and because they were not to be accomplished all at once, but required several ages to their perfect completion, and we see them, in some instances, fulfilling to this very day.

In the conclusion of the 23d chapter of St. Matthew, our Saviour had, with the most merciful severity, with the most compassionate justice, pronounced the sentence of desolation upon Jerusalem: (ver. 37, 38) "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." In like manner, upon another occasion, when he was approaching to Jerusalem, (Luke, xix. 41, 42) "He beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." So deeply was our Saviour affected, and so tenderly did he lament over the calamities which were coming upon his nation! Such a generous and amiable pattern of a patriot spirit hath he left to his disciples; and so contrary to truth is the insinuation of a noble writer,* that there is nothing in the gospels to recommend and encourage the love of one's country.

When our Saviour uttered that pathetic lamentation, recorded in the 23d chapter of St. Matthew, he was in the temple, speaking to a mixed audience of his disciples and the multitude; and as he was departing out of the temple (ver. 1, chap. xxiv.) "his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple," intimating what a pitiable calamity they thought it that so magnificent a structure should be destroyed. In the other gospels,

* Shaftesbury's Characteristics, vol. 1, p. 99.

they are represented as saying (Mark, xiii. 1), "Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here!" and as speaking of the temple (Luke, xxi. 5) "how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts." The gifts of ages were reposited there, the presents of kings and emperors, as well as the offerings of the Jews;* and as the whole temple was built with the greatest cost and magnificence, so nothing was more stupendous than the uncommon measure of the stones. The disciples appear to have admired them particularly, and to have thought them very extraordinary; and indeed they were of a size almost incredible. "Those employed in the foundations were, in magnitude, forty cubits," that is, above sixty feet, a cubit being somewhat more than a foot and a half; "and the superstructure was worthy of such foundations." There were some stones of the whitest marble, forty-five cubits long, five cubits high, and six broad, as a priest of the temple hath described them. Such a structure as this, one would have expected, might have endured for many generations, and was indeed worthy of the highest admiration; but, notwithstanding, our Saviour assures his disciples, (ver. 6) "There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." Our Saviour, in his prophecies, frequently alludes to phrases and expressions used by the ancient prophets; and as the prophet Haggai, (ii. 15) expresseth the building of the temple by "a stone being laid upon a stone," so Christ expresseth the destruction of it by "one stone not being left upon another." In the same manner he speaketh of and to the city, (Luke, xix. 44) "They shall lay thee even with the ground, and shall not leave in thee one stone upon another." It is a proverbial and figurative manner of expression, to denote an utter destruction, and

* Vide Joseph. de Bell. Jud., lib. 5, cap. 13, sec. 6, edit. Hudson.

the prophecy would have been amply fulfilled, if the city and temple had been utterly ruined, though every single stone had not been overturned. But it happened in this case, that the words were almost literally fulfilled, and scarce "one stone was left upon another." For when the Romans had taken Jerusalem, "Titus ordered his soldiers to dig up the foundations, both of all the city and the temple." The temple was a building of such strength and grandeur, of such splendour and beauty, that it was likely to be preserved, as it was worthy to be preserved, for a monument of the victory and glory of the Roman empire. Titus was accordingly very desirous of preserving it, and protested to the Jews, who had fortified themselves within it, "that he would preserve it, even against their will."* He had expressed the like desire of preserving the city too, and sent Josephus and other Jews again and again to their countrymen, to persuade them to a surrender.† But an over-ruling providence directed things otherwise. The Jews themselves first set fire to the porticoes of the temple, and then the Romans.‡ "One of the soldiers, neither waiting for any command nor trembling for such an attempt, but urged by a certain divine impulse, threw a burning brand in at the golden window, and thereby set fire to the buildings of the temple itself." Titus ran immediately to the temple, and commanded the soldiers to extinguish the flame.§ But neither exhortations nor threatening could restrain their violence. They either could not hear, or would not hear; and those behind encouraged those be-

* Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 6, cap. 2, sec. 4, p. 1269, edit. Hudson.

† Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 5, cap. 8, sec. 1, cap. 9, sec. 2, &c. cap. 11, sec. 2; lib. 6, cap. 2, sec. 1, edit. Hudson.

‡ Joseph. de. Bell. Jud. lib. 6, cap. 2, sec. 9, edit. Hudson.

§ Joseph. ibid. sec. 6 et 7.

fore to set fire to the temple. He was still for preserving the holy place. He commanded his soldiers even to be beaten for disobeying him; but their anger, and their hatred of the Jews, and a certain warlike vehement fury, overcame their reverence for their general, and their dread of their commands. A soldier in the dark set fire to the doors; and thus, as Josephus says, "the temple was burnt against the will of Cæsar." Afterwards, as we read in the Jewish Talmud, and in Maimonides,* Ternus Rufus, or rather Terentius Rufus, who was left to command the army at Jerusalem, did, with a ploughshare, tear up the foundations of the temple; and thereby signally fulfilled those words of Micah, (iii. 12) "Therefore shall Zion, for your sake, be ploughed as a field." Eusebius too, affirms, "that it was ploughed up by the Romans, and he saw it lying in ruins."† The city also shared the same fate, and was burnt and destroyed, as well as the temple.‡ "The Romans burnt the extremest parts of the city, and demolished the walls." Three towers only, and some part of the wall were left standing,§ for the better encamping of the soldiers, and to shew the posterity what a city, and how fortified, the valour of the Romans had taken. All the rest of the city was so demolished and levelled with the ground, that they who came to see it, could not believe that it was ever inhabited. After the city was thus taken and destroyed, great riches were found among the ruins; and the Romans dug it up in

* See them quoted in Lightfoot, Whitby, and others, upon this place.

† Eusebii Demons. Evangel. lib. 6, cap. 13, p. 273, edit. Paris, 1628.

‡ Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 6, cap. 6, sec. 3, cap. 7, sec. 2, cap. 8, sec. 5, edit. Hudson.

§ Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 7, cap. 1, sec. 1, edit. Hudson.

search of the treasures which had been concealed and buried in the earth.* So literally were our Saviour's words accomplished, in the ruin both of the city and of the temple; and well might Eleazer say, that "God had delivered his most holy city to be burnt, and to be subverted by their enemies," and wish "that they all had died, before they saw that holy city demolished by the hands of their enemies, and the sacred temple so wickedly dug up from the foundations." In this plain manner, our Saviour, now drawing near to his fatal hour, foretold the absolute ruin and destruction of the city and temple. The disciples were curious to know more of these events, when they should be, and how they should be; but yet thought it not proper to ask him at present, the multitude probably still flocking about him; and therefore they take an opportunity of coming unto him "privately, as he was sitting upon the Mount of Olives," from whence was a good prospect of the city and temple, and there prefer their request to him (ver. 3). "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" These are only different expressions to denote the same period with the destruction of Jerusalem, for when, they conceived, would be the destruction of Jerusalem, then, they conceived, would be the coming of Christ; and when, they conceived, would be the coming of Christ, then, they conceived, would be "the end of the world," or rather (as it should be rendered) "the conclusion of the age." "The end of the world," or "the conclusion of the age," is the same period with the destruction of Jerusalem; for there being two ages (as they are called) among the Jews, the one under the law, the other the Messiah; when the city and temple were destroyed, and the Jewish polity in church and state were dissolved, the former age must, of course, be concluded, and the age

* Joseph. ibid. cap. 5, sec. 2.

under the Messiah commenced. It is true, the phrase συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος, most usually signifies "the end of the world," properly so called; as in the parable of the tares (Matt. xiii. 39), "the harvest is συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος, the end of the world:" (ver. 40) as, therefore, the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire, "so shall it be ἐν τῃ συντελείᾳ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, in the end of this world." And again, (ver. 49) "So shall it be ἐν τῃ συντελείᾳ τοῦ αἰῶνος, at the end of the world, the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just." In like manner, our Saviour says to his disciples, (Matt. xxviii. 20) "Lo, I am with you always, ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος, even unto the end of the world." But here the phrase appears to be used much in the same manner as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ix. 26, "But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself;" in the end of the world, ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ τῶν αἰώνων, in the conclusion of the Jewish age or ages: and these, I think, are all the places where the phrase occurs in scripture. "The coming of Christ," is also the same period with the destruction of Jerusalem, as may appear from several places in the gospels, and particularly from these two passages, "There are some standing here," saith our blessed Lord, "who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. xvi. 28): that is evidently, there are some standing here who shall live, not till the end of the world, to the coming of Christ to judge mankind, but till the destruction of Jerusalem, to the coming of Christ in judgment upon the Jews. In another place (John, xxi. 22), speaking to Peter, concerning John, he saith, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" what is it to thee, if I will that he live till the destruction of Jerusalem? as in truth he did, and longer. "The coming of Christ," and "the conclusion of the age," being, therefore, only different expressions, to denote the same period with the destruc-

tion of Jerusalem, the purport of the question plainly is, "When shall the destruction of Jerusalem be, and what shall be the signs of it?" In the parallel place of St. Mark, (xiii. 4) the question is put thus, "When shall these things be, and what sign will there be, when these things shall be fulfilled?" In the parallel place of St. Luke, (xxi. 7) the question is put thus "When shall these things be, and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?" So that the disciples ask two things: first, the "time" of the destruction of Jerusalem, "when these things shall be?" and secondly, the "signs" of it, "and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" as it is in St. Mark; "and what will be the sign when these things shall come to pass?" as it is in St. Luke; "and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the conclusion of the age?" as it is in St. Matthew. The latter part of the question our Saviour answereth first, and treateth of the "signs" of his coming, and the destruction of Jerusalem, from the 4th to the 31st verse inclusive; and then passeth on to the other part of the question concerning the "time" of his coming; and these two heads of our Saviour's answer shall, likewise, in the same method and order, be made the subject of this discourse.

Our blessed Saviour treateth of the signs of his coming and the destruction of Jerusalem, from the 4th to the 31st verse inclusive; by "signs," meaning the circumstances and accidents which should forerun, usher in, and attend this great event; and I am persuaded the whole compass of history cannot furnish us with a prophecy more exactly fulfilled in all points than this hath been. False Christs, our Saviour mentions, as the first sign of his coming, (ver. 4 and 5) "Take heed that no man deceive you, for many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ, and shall deceive many." With this he begins in all the evangelists, and in all useth almost the same words; only in St. Luke,

xxi. 8, he addeth, "the time draweth near;" and indeed within a little time this part of the prophecy began to be fulfilled; for very soon after our Saviour's decease, appeared Simon Magus, (Acts viii. 9, 10,) "and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one, to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "this man is the great power of God;" He boasted himself likewise among the Jews, as the son of God.* Of the same stamp and character was also Dositheus, the Samaritan, who pretended that he was the Christ foretold by Moses. In the reign of Claudius, about twelve years after the death of our Saviour, when Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea, a certain impostor named Theudas, persuaded a great multitude, with their best effects, to follow him to the river Jordan, for he said that he was a prophet, and promised to divide the river for their passage; and "saying these things, he deceived many,"† saith Josephus; but Fadus sent a troop of horse against them, who falling unexpectedly upon them, killed many, and made many prisoners; and having taken Theudas alive, they cut off his head, and brought it to Jerusalem. A few years afterwards, in the reign of Nero, and under the procuratorship of Felix, these impostors arose so frequent, that "many of them were apprehended and killed every day."‡ They seduced great numbers of the people still expecting the Messiah, and well therefore might our Saviour caution his disciples against them.

The next signs he giveth of his coming are several terrible calamities, as wars, and rumours of wars, famines and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places; (ver. 6, 7,)

* Irenæi. lib. 1, cap. 20, p. 94, edit. Grabe. Theodorit Hæretic. Fab. lib. 1, cap. 1, p. 192, vol. 4, edit. Paris, 1642.

† Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 4, sect. 1, p. 866, edit. Hudson.

‡ Joseph. Antiq. cap. 7, sect. 5, p. 892.

"and ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet; for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." Accordingly there were "wars and rumours of wars," as appears in all the historians of those times, and above all in Josephus. To relate the particulars, would indeed be to transcribe great part of his history of the Jewish wars. There were more especially "rumours of wars," when Caligula, the Roman emperor ordered his statue to be set up in the temple of Jerusalem,* which the Jews refused to suffer, and persisted in their refusal; and having therefore reason to apprehend a war from the Romans, were in such a consternation, that they omitted even the tilling of the land; but this storm was soon blown over, and their fears were dissipated by the untimely death of that emperor. It is said, moreover, that "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Here, as Grotius well observes, Christ declares that greater disturbances than those which happened under Caligula, should fall out in the latter times of Claudius, and in the reign of Nero. That of nation against nation portended the dissentions, insurrections, and mutual slaughter of the Jews, and those of other nations, who dwelt in the same cities together, as particularly at Cæsarea, where the Jews and Syrians contended about the right of the city, which contention at length proceeded so far, that about twenty thousand Jews were slain, and the city was cleared of the Jewish inhabitants.† At this blow, the whole nation of the Jews were exasperated, and dividing themselves into parties, they

* Joseph. Antiq. lib. 18, cap. 9. De Bell. Jud. lib. 2, cap. 10, edit. Hudson. Philo contra Flaccum. Tacitus Hist. lib. 5.

† Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 7, sect. 7, &c. De Bell Jud. lib. 2, cap. 13, sect. 7, cap. 18, sect. 1, edit. Hudson.

burnt and plundered the neighbouring cities and villages of the Syrians, and made an immense slaughter of the people. The Syrians, in revenge, destroyed not a less number of the Jews; "and every city," as Josephus expresseth it, "was divided into two armies." At Scythopolis, the inhabitants compelled the Jews, who resided among them, to fight against their own countrymen, and after the victory, basely setting upon them by night, murdered above thirteen thousand of them, and spoiled their goods.* At Ascalon, they killed two thousand and five hundred; at Ptolemais, two thousand, and made not a few prisoners.† The Syrians put many to death, and imprisoned more; the people of the Gadara did likewise, and all the other cities of Syria in proportion, as they hated or feared the Jews. At Alexandria, the old enmity was revived between the Jews and Heathens, and many fell on both sides, but of the Jews to the number of fifty thousand.‡ The people of Damascus too, conspired against the Jews of the same city, and assaulting them unarmed, killed ten thousand of them.§ That of "kingdom against kingdom" portended the open wars of different tetrarchies and provinces against one another, as that of the Jews who dwelt in Peraece, against the people of Philadelphia, concerning their bounds, while Cuspius Fadus was procurator;‖ and that of the Jews and Galileans against the Samaritans, for the murder of some Galileans going up to the feast at Jerusalem, while Cumanus was procurator;¶

* Joseph. Antiq. sect. 3. Vita Josephi, sect. 6.

† De Bell. Jud. lib. 2, cap. 18, sect. 5.

‡ Joseph. Antiq. sect. 7 and 8.

§ De Bell. Jud. cap. 20, sect. 2.

‖ Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 1, sect. 1.

¶ Joseph. Antiq. cap. 5. De Bell. Jud. lib. 1, cap. 12. sect. 3, &c.

and that of the whole nation of the Jews against the Romans, and Agrippa, and other allies of the Roman empire, which began while Gessius Florus was procurator; but as Josephus saith, "there was not only sedition and civil war throughout Judea, but likewise in Italy,"* Otho and Vitellius contending for the empire. It is farther added, "and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places;" there were famines, as particularly that prophesied of by Agabus, and mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, xi, 28; and by Suetonius and other profane historians,† referred to by Eusebius, "which shall come to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar," and was so severe at Jerusalem, that as Josephus saith, "many perished for want of victuals;"‡ and "pestilences," for these are the usual attendants upon famines. Scarcity, and badness of provisions, almost always end in some epidemical distemper. We see many died by reason of the famine, in the reign of Claudius; and Josephus farther informs us, that when Niger was killed by the Jewish zealots, he imprecated, besides other calamities, famine and pestilences upon them, λιμοὶ τὲ καὶ λοιμοὶ the very words used by the evangelists, all which (saith he) God ratified and brought to pass against the ungodly§; "and earthquakes in divers places," as particularly that in Crete, in the reign of Claudius, mentioned by Philostratus in the life of Apollonius; and those also mentioned by Philostratus at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, in all which places some

* De Bell. Jud. lib. 4, cap. 9, sect. 9, p. 1200.

† Suetonius in Claudio, 18. Tacit. Annal. lib. 12. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 2, cap. 8.

‡ Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 2, sect. 6, p. 881. Ibid, cap. 4, sect. 2, edit. Hudson.

§ Quæ sanè universa contra improbos rata habuit Deus. De Bell. Jud. lib. 4, cap. 6, sect. 1, p. 1186, edit. Hudson.

Jews inhabited, and those at Rome, mentioned by Tacitus,* and that at Laodicea, in the reign of Nero, mentioned by Tacitus, which city was overthrown, as were likewise Hieropolis and Colosse; and that in Campania, mentioned by Seneca;† and that at Rome, in the reign of Galba, mentioned by Suetonius; and that in Judea, mentioned by Josephus; "for by night there broke out a most dreadful tempest, and violent strong wind, with the most vehement showers, and continual lightnings, and horrid thunderings, and prodigious bellowings of the shaken earth; and it was manifest (as he saith) that the constitution of the universe was confounded for the destruction of men; and any one might easily conjecture that these things portended no common calamity."

To these, St. Luke added, (xxi. 11,) there "shall be fearful sights and great signs from heaven." Josephus, in the preface to his History of the Jewish War, undertakes to relate "the signs and prodigies which preceded the taking of the city;"‡ he relates accordingly, that "a star hung over the city like a sword, and the comet continued for a whole year;"§ that "the people being assembled to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread, at the ninth hour of the night there shone so great a light about the altar and the temple, that it seemed to be bright day, and this continued for half an hour;"|| that "at the same feast, a cow, led by the priest to sacrifice, brought forth a

* Tacit Annal. lib. 12, p. 91, edit. Lepsii.

† Nat. Quæst. lib. 6, cap. 1.

‡ Quæque præciperant signæ et prodigia. Sect. 11, p. 957.

§ Ὑπὲρ τὴν πόλιν ἄστρον ἔστη ῥομφαία παραπλήσιον καὶ κομήτης ἐπ' ἐνιαυτὸν κομήτης.

|| Populo ad festum diem Axymorum congregato, horâ noctis nonâ tanta lux circa altare templumque circumfusa est, ut dies clarus esse videretur, atque hoc horæ dimidiæ spatio duravit.

lamb in the middle of the temple;"* that "the eastern gate† of the temple, which was of brass and very heavy, and was scarcely shut in the evening by twenty men, and was fastened by strong bars and bolts, was seen, at the sixth hour of the night, opened of its own accord, and could hardly be shut again;" that "before the setting of the sun, there were seen over all the country, chariots and armies fighting in the clouds, and besieging cities;" that "at the feast of pentecost, as the priests were going into the inner temple by night, as usual, to attend their service, they heard first a motion and noise, and then a voice as of a multitude, saying, 'Let us depart hence;'" and, what he reckons as the most terrible of all, that one Jesus, an ordinary country fellow, four years before the war began, when the city was in peace and plenty, came to the feast of tabernacles, and ran crying up and down the streets day and night, "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the temple, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, a voice against all the people!"‡ The magistrates endeavoured by stripes and tortures to restrain him, but he still cried with a mournful voice, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" This he continued to do for seven years and five months together, and especially at the great festivals; and he neither grew hoarse nor tired, but went about the walls, and cried with a loud voice, "Woe, woe to the city, and to the people, and to the temple;" and as he added at last, "Woe, woe also to myself!" it happened that a stone from some sling or engine immediately struck him dead. These were indeed "fearful sights, and

* Καὶ κατα την ἀυτην ἑορτην, βοῦς μὲν ἀχθεῖσα ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως προς την θυσίαν ἔτεκεν ἄρνα ἐν τῳ ἱερῳ μέσῳ.

† Sed et janna, &c.

‡ Quod vero his omnibus terribilius est Jesus quidam, &c.

great signs from heaven;" and there is not a more credible historian than the author who relates them, and who appeals to the testimony of those who saw and heard them. But it may add some weight to his relation, that Tacitus, the Roman historian, also gives a summary account of the same occurrences. He saith, that "there happened several prodigies; armies were seen engaging in the heavens, arms were seen glittering, and the temple shone with the sudden fire of the clouds; the doors of the temple opened suddenly, and a voice greater than human was heard; that the gods were departing, and likewise a great motion of their departing."* Dr. Jortin's remark is very pertinent: "If Christ had not expressly foretold this, many who give little heed to portents, and who know that historians have been too credulous in that point, would have suspected that Josephus exaggerated, and that Tacitus was misinformed; but as the testimonies of Josephus and Tacitus confirm the predictions of Christ, so the predictions of Christ confirm the wonders recorded by these historians."† But even allowing all that credulity can urge,—that in the great calamities of war, and famine, and pestilence, the people always grow superstitious, and are struck with religious panics; that they see nothing then but prodigies and portents, which in happier seasons were overlooked; that some of these appear to be formed in imitation of the Greek and Roman historians, as particularly the cow bringing forth a lamb; that armies fighting in the clouds, seen in calamitous times in all ages and countries, are nothing more than meteors, such as the

* Evenerant prodigia: visæ per cœlum concurrere, acies rutilantia arma et subito nubium igne collucere templum, expassæ repente delubri fores, et audita major humanâ vox. Simul ingens motus excedentium.----Tacit. Hist. lib. 5, p. 217. Edit. Lipsii.

† Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, Vol. i, p. 41.

aurora borealis; in short, allowing that some of these prodigies were feigned, and others were exaggerated, yet the prediction of them is not the less divine on that account. Whether they were supernatural, or the fictions only of disordered imagination, yet they were believed as realities, and had all the effects of realities, and were equally worthy to be made the object of prophecy. "Fearful sights and great signs from heaven," they certainly were, as much as if they had been created on purpose to astonish the earth. But notwithstanding all these terrible calamities, our Saviour exhorts his disciples not to be troubled. The Jews may be under dreadful apprehensions, as they were, particularly in the case of Caligula, above mentioned; but "be not ye troubled, for all these things shall come to pass, but the end is not yet," but the destruction of Jerusalem is not yet. "All these things are only the beginning of sorrows," verse 8, ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων. Great troubles and calamities are often expressed in scripture language metaphorically, by the pains of travailing women. All these are only the first pangs of throes, and are nothing to that hard labour which shall follow. From the calamities of the nation in general, he passed to those of the Christians in particular; and indeed the former were in great measure the occasion of the latter,—famines, pestilences, earthquakes, and the like calamities, being reckoned judgments for the sins of the Christians, and the poor Christians being often maltreated and persecuted on that account, as we learn from some of the earliest apologists for the Christian religion. Now the calamities which were to befal the Christians, were cruel persecutions, ver. 9, "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations," not only of the Jews, but likewise of the Gentiles, "for my name's sake." St. Mark and St. Luke are rather more particular. St. Mark saith, (xiii. 9—11.) "They shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye

shall be beaten; and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." St. Luke saith, (xxi. 12—15.) "But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake; and it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for I will give a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay, nor resist." We need look no farther than the Acts of the Apostles for the completion of these particulars. There are instances enough of the sufferings of some Christians, and of the deaths of others. Some are "delivered to councils," as Peter and John, (iv. 3.) &c. Some are "brought before rulers and kings," as Paul before Gallio, (xviii. 12.) Felix, (xxiv.) Festus, and Agrippa (xxv.) Some have "a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay, nor resist," as it is said of Stephen, (vi. 10.) that "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake," and Paul made even Felix to "tremble," (xxiv. 25.)—and the gospel still prevailed against all opposition and persecution whatever. Some are imprisoned, as Peter and John. (iv. 3.) Some are beaten, as Paul and Silas. (xvi. 23.) Some are put to death, as Stephen (vii. 59.) and James the brother of John. (xii. 2.) But if we look still further, we have a more melancholy proof of the truth of this prediction in the persecutions under Nero, in which (beside numberless other Christians) fell those two champions of our faith, St. Peter and St. Paul. And it was *nominis prælium*, as Tertullian calleth it,—it was a war against a very name. Though a

man was possessed of every human virtue, yet it was crime enough if he was a Christian; so true were our Saviour's words, that they should be "hated of all nations for my name's sake." But they were not only to be hated of all nations, but were also to be betrayed by apostates and traitors of their own brethren, (Matt. xxiv. 10.) "And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another." By reason of persecution "many shall be offended," and apostatize from the faith, as particularly those mentioned by St. Paul in his Second Epistle to Timothy i. 15, "Phygellus and Hermogenes, who, with many others in Asia, turned away from him," and (iv. 10.) "Demas, who forsook him, having loved this present world." But they shall not only apostatize from the faith, but also "shall betray one another, and shall hate one another." To illustrate this point, we need only cite a sentence out of Tacitus, speaking of the persecutions under Nero. "At first," says he, "several were seized who confessed, and then by their discovery a great multitude of others were convicted and barbarously executed."

False teachers, too, and false prophets, were to infest the church, (Matt. xxiv. 11.) "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." Such particularly was Simon Magus; and his followers, the Gnostics, were very numerous. Such also were the Judaizing teachers, false teachers as they were called by St. Paul, (2 Cor. xi. 13.) "deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." Such also were Hymeneus and Philetus, of whom the apostle complains (2 Tim. ii. 17, 18) that they affirmed "the resurrection to be past already, and overthrew the faith of some."

The genuine fruit and effect of these evils was lukewarmness and coolness among Christians, (Matt. xxiv. 12.) "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." By reason of these trials and persecutions from without, and these apostacies and false prophets

from within, the love of many to Christ and his doctrine, and also their love to one another, shall wax cold. Some shall openly desert the faith, as verse 10; others shall corrupt it, as verse 11; and others again, as here, shall grow indifferent to it. And (not to mention other instances) who can hear St. Paul complaining at Rome, (2 Tim. iv. 16) that at his "first answer no man stood with him, but all men forsook him;" who can hear the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews exhorting them (x. 25.) "not to forsake the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is;" and not conclude the event to have sufficiently justified our Saviour's prediction? "But he that shall endure to the end," (Matt. xxiv. 13.)—but he who shall not be terrified by these trials and persecutions—he who shall neither apostatize from the faith himself, nor be seduced by others—he who shall not be ashamed to profess his faith in Christ, and love to his brethren—"the same shall be saved," saved both here and hereafter. "Then shall not a hair of your head perish," as it is in Luke xxi. 18; and indeed it is very remarkable, and was certainly a most signal act of Providence, that none of the Christians perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. So true and prophetic also was that assertion of St. Peter, upon this same occasion, (2 Pet. ii. 9.) "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations."

But notwithstanding the persecutions and calamities of the Christians, there was to be a universal publication of the gospel before the destruction of Jerusalem, (Matt. xxiv. 14.) "and this gospel of the kingdom" (this gospel of the kingdom of God) "shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come;" and then shall the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish polity come to pass, when all nations shall be, or may be, convinced of the crying sin of the Jews in crucifying the Lord of Glory, and of the jus-

tice of God's judgments upon for it. The Acts of the Apostles contain only a small part of the history of a small part of the Apostles; and yet even in that history we see the gospel was widely disseminated, and had taken root in the most considerable parts of the Roman empire. As early as in the reign of Nero, the Christians were grown so numerous at Rome, as to raise the jealousy of the government, and the first general persecution was commenced against them under pretence of their having set fire to the city, of which the emperor himself was really guilty, but willing to transfer the blame and odium upon the poor innocent Christians; Clement, who was a contemporary and fellow-labourer with St. Paul, says of him, in particular, that "he was a preacher both in the east and in the west, that he taught the whole world righteousness, and travelled as far as to the utmost borders of the west;" and if such were the labours of one apostle, though the chiefest of the apostles, what were the united labours of them all! It appears, indeed, from the writers of the history of the church, that from the destruction of Jerusalem, the gospel was not only preached in Lesser Asia, and Greece, and Italy, the great theatres of action then in the world, but was likewise propagated as far northward as Scythia; as far southward as Ethiopia; as far eastward as Parthia and India; as far westward as Spain and Britain. Our ancestors of this island seem to have lain as remote from the scene of our Saviour's actions as almost any nation, and were a "rough, inhospitable people," as unlikely to receive so civilized an institution as any people whatsoever. But yet there is some probability that the gospel was preached here by "St. Simon, the apostle;" there is much greater probability that it was preached here by St. Paul; and there is absolute certainty that Christianity was planted in this country in the days of the apostles, before the destruction of Jerusalem. Agreeably to this, Eusebius informs us that the apostles preached the

gospel in all the world, and some of them passed beyond the ocean to the Britannic isles. Theodorit likewise affirms, that the Apostles had induced every nation and kind of men to embrace the gospel; and among the converted nations, he reckons particularly the Britons. St. Paul himself, in his Epistle to the Colossians, i. 6, 23, speaketh of the gospel's being "come into all the world, and preached to every creature under heaven;" and in his Epistle to the Romans, x. 18, very elegantly applies to the lights of the church, what the Psalmist said of the lights of heaven: "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." But how improbable, and in all human appearance, impossible, was it that a few poor fishermen, and such inferior illiterate persons should propagate and establish a new religion in so short a space of time throughout the world? Doubtless it was not man's but God's work; and from the same divine spirit proceeded both the prophecy and the completion.

We have deduced the prophecied so low as to the siege of Jerusalem, and now let us stop to make a few short reflections upon what has been said.

The first reflection that naturally occurs, is the strange and surprising manner in which these prophesies have been fulfilled, and the great argument that may thence be drawn for the truth of our Saviour's divine mission; but we shall have a fitter opportunity for enlarging upon this hereafter.

Another reflection we may make on the sincerity and ingenuity of Christ, and the courage and constancy of his disciples; had Jesus been an impostor, he would, like all other impostors, have fed his followers with fair hopes and promises; but on the contrary, we see that he denounced persecution to be the lot of his disciples; he pointed out to them the difficulties they must encounter, the fiery trials they must undergo, and yet they did not therefore

stagger in their faith; they did not therefore, like faint-hearted soldiers, forsake their colours, and desert their service. One hardly knoweth whom to admire most; him for dealing so plainly with them, or them for adhering so steadily to him; such instances are rarely found of openness on one side, and of fidelity on the other.

A third reflection we may find on the sudden and amazing progress of the gospel, that it should spread so far and so wide before the destruction of Jerusalem; the greatness of the work that was wrought, the meanness of the instruments which wrought it, and the short time that it was wrought in, must force all considering men to say, "This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes." Psalm cxviii. 23.—The Mahommedan religion, indeed, in less than a century, overrun a great part of the world; but then it was propagated by the sword, and owed its success to arms and violence; but the Christian religion was diffused over the face of the earth in forty years, and prevailed, not only without the sword, but against the sword; not only without the powers, civil and military, to support it, but against them all, united to oppress it. And what but the spirit of God could bid it thus go forth "conquering, and to conquer." Rev. vi. 2.—"Had this council, or this work been of men," as Gamaliel argued, it would have come to nought, but being of God, nothing could overthrow it." Acts v. 38, 39.

A fourth reflection we may make, (and it is the last I shall make,) that seldom any state is ruined, but there are evident signals and presages of it. Few people have their fate particularly foretold by prophets, like the Jews; nor indeed can the fate of any people be so particularly foretold, the time, the manner, and all the circumstances preceding and succeeding, without divine inspiration. So many passages and circumstances cannot be particularly foretold, unless particularly revealed; but in the general,

without the spirit of prophecy, it is no difficult matter to perceive when cities and kingdoms are tending towards their final period and dissolution. There are as certain tokens and symptoms of a consumption and decay in the body politic, as in the body natural. I would not presage ill to my country, but when we consider the many heinous and presumptuous sins of this nation, the licentiousness and violation of all order and discipline, the daring insolence of robbers, in open defiance of all law and justice; the factions and divisions, the venality and corruption, the avarice and profusion of all ranks and degrees among us; the total want of public spirit, and ardent passion for private ends and interests; the luxury and gaming, and dissoluteness in high life; and the laziness, and drunkenness, and debauchery in low life; and above all, that barefaced ridicule of all virtue and decency, and that scandalous neglect, and I wish I could not say contempt of all public worship and religion; when we consider these things, these signs of the times, the stoutest and most sanguine of us all must tremble at the natural and probable consequences of them. God gave us grace that we may "know at least in this our day, the things which belong unto our peace," before "they are hid from our eyes." Luke xix. 42.—Never may such blindness happen to us as befell the Jews; but may we "seek the Lord, while he may be found, and call upon while he is near; and return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon us, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isaiah lv. 6, 7.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ATONEMENT FROM THE FIRST OF GENESIS TO THE LAST OF REVELATIONS.—CHRIST'S MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD EFFICACIOUS FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.

IN treating a subject of such importance as the doctrine of atonement, it is of consequence to add weight to our own opinions by every preponderating influence which we can procure. The following of Dr. Wardlaw's appears to be of much importance, and to coincide so completely with our own, that we shall make no apology for presenting it; being assured that the soundness of the arguments, and the orthodoxy of the principles, will cause it be perused with pleasure and profit.

Rom. iii. 25, 26.

"*Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.*"

"The value of the gospel," says an eminent Unitarian writer,* "depends not at all upon any idea we may have concerning the *person of Christ;* all that we ought to regard is the *object of his mission*, and the *authority* with which his doctrine was promulgated. The doctrine of immortality, which is the great object of the whole revealed will of God, is just as acceptable from the mouth of the son of Joseph and Mary, as from the mouth of any man

* Dr. Priestley.

created for the purpose, from the mouth of an angel, or from the voice of God himself speaking from heaven."

How different from those of this writer, were the thoughts and feelings of the inspired author of the epistle to the Hebrews. "God," says he, "who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his own Son;" and having in the remainder of the first chapter, illustrated the glory of the person of Christ, as the superior of prophets and of angels, the equal of God the Father, the everlasting and almighty Creator of all things; he deduces from the view just given an inference, founded on the obvious principle, that the importance of the message, and the danger of rejecting it, must bear some proportion to the dignity of the messenger by whom it was sent: "THEREFORE we ought to give the most earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For, if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness with signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will!*" If Jesus was not superior to prophets and angels, there is no force in this conclusion; and, on the other hand, the higher his superiority, the more impressive is the inference, and the more imperative the duty.

If, indeed, the *sole object* of the mission of Christ, was to assure men of "the *doctrine of immortality;*" if, as the same writer elsewhere alleges, "his business, like that of any other prophet, was nothing more than to deliver a message from God, and to confirm it by miracles;" we

* Heb. ii, 1, 4.

should, in that case, on the supposition of the divinity of Christ, find it difficult to vindicate the wisdom of God from the charge of exciting useless astonishment, by using a method so extraordinary for the accomplishment of an end, which might surely have been effected by simpler means. On this principle, we should have been constrained to admit, if not entirely, at least in a very great degree, the alleged *inutility* of the doctrine, which it has been my object to establish.

But we distinctly and entirely deny the justice of the representation, which is thus given, of the purpose of Christ's mission. That he was "a teacher sent from God," we cordially admit. That "life and incorruption were brought to light," to clear and unclouded light, "by his gospel," we rejoice to know and to acknowledge; but that the sole, or even the principal design of his coming was to confirm the certainty of a future state, and assure mankind of a judgment to come, we cannot, by any means allow. We assert, that he came in the character not only of a prophet, but of a priest; not to instruct merely, but to redeem; not only to set an example of obedience, but to atone for transgression, "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" that when life and incorruption are said to have been brought to light by the gospel, the meaning is, not merely that the doctrine of a future state was certified to men; but that by his "finishing the work given him to do," the ground of hope was laid, and the way to enjoyment of eternal happiness in that state clearly and fully made known.

When we consider, that the period denominated "the fulness of the time," the period of the expected Messiah's advent, holds so prominent a place in the Old Testament scriptures, appearing there as the point to which all preceding time looked forward, that what was then to be accomplished was brought before the eye of hope by so vast a variety of typical institutions; that it constituted the

"spirit of prophecy," being the theme of its sublimest and most rapturous anticipations, the burden of its sweetest songs, the chief of its great and precious promises; that those "holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," exhausted on this subject the language of astonishment and delight: when we consider all this, we should have good reason, surely, to be surprised, if after all, the sum of what was to be accomplished at that remarkable epoch, was nothing more than the confirmation of a truth already known.

While we readily admit, therefore, *that the object of the mission of Christ* is what ought supremely to engage our attention, we conceive that, even from previous and preparatory circumstances, there was strong ground to conclude that this object was to be something more than what has now been stated, we are convinced that it actually *was* something more; and that the purpose of his appearing was so far from having no connection with the doctrine of his divinity, that his divinity was essential to its accomplishment.

Further: if the fact be indeed, as I have been endeavouring to prove, that God was manifested in the flesh; the greatness and singularity of the fact, may well convince us of the magnitude of the design. An event so prodigious as the appearance of God in our nature, could not take place either for no purpose, or for a purpose of trifling moment. The God of infinite wisdom does nothing in vain. Every effort of his power has an end in view, an end always worthy of himself in its nature, and, in its importance, proportionate to the means employed for its accomplishment. The two great general purposes which are constantly regarded by him in all his works, and in all his ways, are the manifestation of his own glory, and in connection with it, the happiness of his sensitive, and especially of his intelligent creatures. Both of these

purposes we consider as having been eminently answered, by the incarnation, sufferings, and death of the Son of God, when viewed in that light in which we believe the word of God to represent them,—AS AN ATONEMENT FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD.

In the preceding part of this epistle, the apostle had proved by an appeal to *facts*, the universal depravity of the Gentiles and of the Jews. At the tenth verse of this chapter he proceeds to show, that the conclusion, to which facts had conducted him, accorded with the declaration of those scriptures of which the Jews acknowledged the divine authority. Having established the sinfulness, he declares the guilt and condemnation of all mankind; he shews the impossibility of any creature's obtaining justification by a law which he has violated, and which, in the plainest and most unqualified terms, pronounces against all transgressors the sentence of death; on the hopelessness of this wretched state, he founds the necessity of *free forgiveness;* and he then points out the leading object of the mediation of Christ, which was to render the exercise of God's mercy, in bestowing such forgiveness, consistent in the eyes of his intelligent creation, with the claims of his dishonored authority, the demands of his justice, the glory of his holiness, the rectitude of his moral administration, and the general good of the universe.

"Whom" (*i. e.* Christ Jesus, verse 24,) "Whom God hath set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

From these verses, I propose to illustrate and prove the five following observations:—

I. It is in consideration of the sacrifice of Christ, that God is propitious to sinners.

II. In pardoning the guilty on this ground, God displays his righteousness.

III. The ground on which the pardon of sin is bestowed, has been in every age, and under every dispensation, the same.

IV. An interest in the pardoning mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, is obtained by faith.

V. In resting our hope of forgiveness on the atoning sacrifice of Christ, we build on a sure foundation.

To say all that might be said, in a field so extensive as this, is more than could well be done in several discourses. It is my intention to confine myself to the more prominent views of the subject; and as I am persuaded that the principal objections brought against the doctrine of atonement, arise from mistaken apprehensions of its nature, I shall endeavour, as much as I can, to avoid controversial discussion, and with as great brevity and simplicity as the nature of the subject will admit, to state what appears to be the testimony of God.

I. Let me now, then, proceed to the illustration of the *first* proposition in the series:—IT IS IN CONSIDERATION OF THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST THAT GOD IS PROPITIOUS TO SINNERS.

There are, amongst critics, different opinions with regard to the proper import in this connection, of the original word translated propitiation. Several of high eminence give it as their judgment, that in its present occurrence, it ought to be translated *propitiatory sacrifice;* while others prefer rendering it propitiatory or *mercy-seat.* To the latter of these two opinions I am inclined to give the preference. The same word occurs in only one other place in the New Testament, in an epistle generally believed to have been written by the same author, Heb. ix. 5. "And over it (viz. the ark of the covenant) the cherubim of glory, shadowing *the mercy-seat;*" in which occurrence of it there can be no doubt about its signification. It is the word also which is invariably used by the Greek translators of the Old Testament, for that part of the sacred

furniture of the tabernacle. The word translated, in other passages, *propitiation*, although of kindred origin, is different. On these grounds, I think the word used in the text should be translated *propitiatory*, or *mercy-seat*. We shall see immediately, however, that with regard to real effect on the subject now before us, there is no very material difference (if, indeed, there be any difference at all) between the one translation and the other.

According to the meaning thus assigned to the word, we have in the text an allusion to the mercy-seat under the law, as a type of Jesus Christ, and of the effects, as will appear, of his atoning sacrifice. To the institution of the mercy-seat we must therefore look, that we may rightly understand the allusion. It is to be found in Exod. xxv. 17—22. "And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end; even on the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark shalt thou put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim that are upon the ark, of the testimony of all things that I will give thee in commandment to the children of Israel."

It is from this description that Jehovah receives the appellation of God that *dwelleth between the cherubim;* an appellation which may consequently be interpreted as of equivalent import with the New Testament characters

—"*the God of peace*"—"*the God of all grace.*" The position of the propitiatory, upon the ark of the testimony, might be intended to indicate the consistency of his appearing in this benign character for the purpose of communing with his guilty creatures, with the claims and sanctions of his righteous law. So that when Jehovah, the God of Israel, "shone forth" from between the cherubim, "mercy and truth" might be said to "meet together, righteousness and peace to embrace each other."

Surely this cannot fail to remind you of him who received from God the Father honor and glory, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED!" It is *in him*, as the subject either of promise, of prophecy, of typical institution, or of direct testimony, that God has all along from the beginning, made himself known to men as "*the God of peace.*" It is in him that he "reconciles the guilty unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

Had nothing further been said respecting the mercy-seat, we might have been led to conclude, that Jehovah appeared there in the exercise of *mere* mercy; I mean of mercy unconnected with any kind of *satisfaction for sin.* With the description of the propitiatory itself, we must, however, connect the account which is elsewhere given of the manner in which it was to be approached by the worshipper; the high priest being expressly enjoined to draw near to Him who dwelt between the cherubim, both in his own behalf, and in behalf of the people, according to certain prescribed rites. A particular account of these is contained in the sixteenth chapter of the book of Leviticus, of which a few verses will show you their general nature, sufficiently for our present purpose. (Ver. 2, 3, 11—15.) "And the Lord said unto Moses, speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place, within the vail, before the mercy-seat, which is upon the ark, that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon

the mercy-seat. Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place, with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself. And he shall take a censer full of burning coals from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail. And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not. And he shall take the blood of the bullock and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward; and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat."

This *goat of the sin offering*, as we learn from the intermediate verses, was one of two, which Aaron was to take from the congregation of the children of Israel: and after it had been thus offered in sacrifice, and its blood brought within the vail, the remaining goat, with all the iniquities of the children of Israel laid upon its head, by the solemn vicarious confession of the High-priest, was to be sent off alive into the wilderness, bearing away emblematically, as a devoted victim, this load of *atoned* and *acknowledged* guilt.—The figure was necessarily *double:* the slain goat typifying the atonement of Christ, and the scape-goat representing its efficacy.

But the circumstance which I wish at present to impress particularly on your attention is, that the mercy-seat was to be approached *with blood;* with the blood of *atonement;* for such it is, in various parts of the chapter, declared to have been. This blood was to be brought within the vail, and

to be sprinkled on, and before the mercy-seat: and while the sacrificial blood was thus presented, the burning incense was, by the cloud of ascending smoke, to diffuse its grateful fragrance, in emblematic testimony of the Divine satisfaction: and this satisfaction is, accordingly, elsewhere expressed, in connexion with the sacrifice of Christ, and with the offerings by which it was typified, by Jehovah's "*smelling a sweet savour.*"

The mercy-seat, then, in order to Jehovah's appearing there as the God of grace, consistently with the glory of his name, must, it appears, be stained with the "blood of sprinkling,"—that "blood that maketh atonement for the soul." The reason why the blood was specifically appointed for this purpose, is emphatically assigned in the subsequent chapter of the book of Leviticus, "For *the life of the flesh is in the blood;* and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." The blood then was an atonement for the soul, because it was the *life* of the victim; and because it was the appointed atonement for the soul, it was to be held sacred, on pain of death.

It is true, that in the chapter of Leviticus first referred to, atonement is said to be made for places and for instruments of service as well as for persons. "And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and shall make an atonement for it, and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and shall put it upon the horns of the altar round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse

it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel."

I would remark, as a good deal of stress is laid by the adversaries of atonement on the circumstance I am now considering, that, in the verses last read, there is a marked connection between the atonement for the holy place and for the instruments of Divine service, and the pollution and guilt of the children of Israel. It is from *their* guilt and pollution that the necessity for such atonement is represented as arising: so that the atonement for the holy place, the tabernacle, and the altar, is still in some sense an atonement for the sins of the people, which are considered as cleaving to, and polluting, and unfitting for the service of God, the places and the instruments of their worship. Of this the verses last quoted are of themselves a sufficient evidence. The apostle Paul, in a similar manner, connects the two ideas "of purifying with blood the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry," and of the atonement made, by the same means, "for the errors of the people."

The law then, I must now observe, by which it was enjoined on pain of death, that the mercy-seat should not be approached otherwise than *with blood*, strikingly represented the necessity of the shedding of the blood of Christ, in order to his being the *true propitiatory;* that is, in order to God's being "IN HIM WELL PLEASED," and thus accessible to sinners as suppliants for mercy. And agreeably to this, it may be noticed, that the declaration of God's satisfaction in his beloved Son, which came from the "excellent glory" on "the holy mount," was connected with the subject of conference between Jesus and his heavenly visitants,—"*the decease which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem.*"

The first of our propositions is further confirmed, by the correspondence of the current language of Scripture

with the meaning of this particular type, as it has been now explained. The doctrine of atonement, or propitiation, pervades the whole of the inspired volume. The following passages and expressions are only a selection, to which a great many more of the same kind might be added:—"He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." "Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." "He shall bear their iniquities." "He bore the sin of many." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "The son of man is come, to give his life a ransom for many." "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." "The bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "Who gave himself for our sins." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "Who gave himself a ransom for all." "Now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's, for this he did once when he offered up himself." "Who, his ownself, bare our sins in his own body on the tree." "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God." "The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin." "Unto him that loved us, and washed us in his own blood from our sins, be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!" "Thou wast slain, and has redeemed us to God by thy blood."

If such passages as these, which are taken from the prophets, from John the Baptist, from Christ himself, and

from his apostles, do not convey the ideas of substitution and atonement, is it possible by human language to convey these ideas at all? What other words and phrases could we select, if it were our special desire to express them more distinctly?

In these passages, you will have perceived, there is a very frequent reference, when the death of Christ is spoken of, to the *sacrifices* of the old dispensation. Now, although the victims which were slain at the altar, and "whose blood was brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin," could not by any virtue of their own, take away the guilt of transgression, so as to save the sinner from its future eternal punishment: (this the apostle affirms was "not possible," and its impossibility was indicated by the constant repetition of the same stated offerings:) yet they were beyond all reasonable question propitiatory in their nature: "their blood was brought into the sanctuary for sin;" and they procured, when duly offered, the remission of its temporal consequences. Some of them were appointed for ceremonial omissions and uncleannesses, and others for the transgression of precepts more directly of a moral nature. But the general idea of atonement pervades and characterizes the whole. It seems to have been the principle on which the Mosaic law was framed, that "*without shedding* of blood there could be no remission." In this marked and prominent feature of its character, it was prefigurative of the true atonement that was to be made for sin "in the fullness of time." It was in this way especially, by typical illustration that God's method of justifying the ungodly was, as the apostle expresses it in the twentieth verse, "*witnessed by the law*." Divest these rites of their typical import, and they become utterly unworthy of the wisdom by which they were appointed. Worthless in themselves, their sole value arose from their being "figures of that which was to come." And from this nature, as

described in the law, they could not, if they were types at all, be typical of any thing else than of a true and proper sacrifice for sin. The animal sacrifices, which from the sacred history, we know to have been offered before the law, even from the earliest times, had the same typical meaning and design. They were only embodied, and perhaps at the same time, multiplied and varied, in the Mosaic ritual;—that law of which the leading feature is expressed by Paul, when he denominates it a "schoolmaster (to direct) to Christ."

If we admit the hypothesis, that the redemption of a lost world by the propitiatory sacrifice of the Son of God, was, from the beginning, the divine intention, we are furnished with a ready and satisfactory explanation of what otherwise remains, notwithstanding all the ingenious attempts of philosophical men to account for it, involved in inexplicable mystery,—I mean the *origin of animal sacrifice*, and the universal traditionary prevalence of it among mankind. On the supposition in question, nothing can be simpler or more natural: on any other, the subject would be involved in difficulty and perplexity.

No sooner had Adam fallen, than the remedy was revealed, in the form of promise, for the ruin which he had brought upon himself, and entailed on his future race.

By the institution of such sacrifices, the particular *nature* of the intended remedy was intimated. For in this singular rite the pious worshipper was reminded, on one hand, for his humiliation, of the forfeiture of his own life, of the death which he deserved on account of sin; and on the other, for his consolation, and peace, and joy, of the promised substitution of another in his stead, to bear his sin, to atone for its guilt, and to save him from its punishment.

This institution having been continued through the antediluvian and patriarchal ages, formed afterward, as we have seen, a very prominent part of the Mosaic ritual.

Its object was still the same. The law, by its sentence of condemnation, against which it provided in itself no adequate remedy, "shut up" those who were under it to the faith which was afterward to be revealed, whilst, by its various rites, it shadowed forth that faith to the attentive and devout enquirer;—discovering, yet concealing, the shadow of good things to come, not the very image of the things. On this hypothesis there is a harmony between the old dispensation and the new, and a unity of design throughout the whole history of the divine procedure towards mankind, which we seek for in vain on any other principle.

Where we speak of the *sacrificial language* of the New Testament, in reference to the death of Christ, it is usual to resolve it all into *figure* and *allusion*. This, however, is at once to deprive the language of its meaning, and the rites alluded to of *theirs*. It is, besides, to charge the writers with singular folly. No idea could be more simple than that of a prophet's dying to confirm his testimony, or rather to prove his sincerity in delivering it, (for his submitting to sufferings and death could prove no more than this,) or even to afford, in his own rising from the grave, the evidence and pledge of a future resurrection. Why such language as that which has been quoted should be so constantly used to express such ideas as these, if these were indeed the ideas intended to be conveyed, is a question which can hardly be answered on any principle consistent with the inspiration, or even with the common sense of the writers. If the death of Christ were not an atonement for sin, the law and the prophets, Jesus himself, his forerunner, and his apostles, all spoke a language which, to me, is utterly unintelligible; and which could not more effectually have deceived, had it been framed for the express purpose of deception.

II. I now proceed to show *in the second place*, that IN PARDONING THE GUILTY ON THIS GROUND, GOD DIS-

PLAYS HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. This is obviously the very spirit of the text:—"*to declare his righteousness* for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *to declare* at this time *his righteousness, that he might be just*, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

The proper idea of *propitiation* is, rendering the *Divine Being propitious, or favorable.* We must beware, however, of understanding by this, any thing like the production of a change in the divine character; as if the blessed God required a motive to pity, an inducement to be merciful, a price for love and grace. Far be such a thought from our minds! We ought to conceive of Jehovah as eternally, infinitely, and immutably, compassionate and merciful. God has been from eternity, and to eternity must continue, the same; "without variableness, or shadow of turning." While God is infinitely and immutably *good*, he is at the same time infinitely and immutably *holy*, and *just*, and *true;* and he never acts in opposition to the one or to the other, but always agreeably to both. He is never just without being merciful, nor merciful without being just.

The character of God is PERFECT EXCELLENCE—INFINITE GOOD:—not a hemisphere of separate stars, but one glorious sun of pure and holy light; forming the character of that infinite Being, of whom it is said, "GOD IS LIGHT; AND IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL."

What, then, is the light in which the doctrine of atonement places the Divine Being? In reply to this question, I observe, that as a righteous lawgiver and ruler, Jehovah must be considered as displeased with his guilty creatures, on account of their violation of his authority; whilst, at the same time, from the infinite benignity of his nature, he is inclined to forgiveness. But, if his government be righteous, its claims, in their full extent, must of necessity be preserved inviolate. The principles of the divine ad-

ministration, the commands and sanctions of God's law, if admitted to have been originally right, can never undergo alteration; for alteration of any kind, even in the way of mitigation or reduction, implies the acknowledgment of error in the first enactments.

The great question then on this momentous subject, comes to be—"IN WHAT MANNER *may forgiveness be extended to the guilty, so as to satisfy the claims of infinite justice, and thus to maintain their full dignity, free from every charge of imperfection or mutability, the character of the Governor, the rectitude of his administration, and the sanction of his law?*"

The rendering of the Divine Being propitious, in this view, refers, it is obvious (and the distinction is one of great importance on this subject), not to the *production* of love in his character, or in the particular state of his mind towards fallen men, but simply the *mode of its expression.* The inquiry is, how may the blessed God express his love, so as effectually to express at the same time his infinite and immutable abhorrence of sin; and thus in "making known the riches of his mercy," to display in connection with it, the inflexibility of his justice, and the unsullied perfection of his holiness?.

When we say that God is displeased with any of his creatures, we speak of them not as *creatures*, but as *sinners.* He hath sworn by himself that "he hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked." But he hates sin—not as possessing any power to affect his own infinite, independent, and unchanging happiness and glory, (I mean his essential glory) for as to these it may well be asked, "can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous, or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect? Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? Will he enter into judgment?" "If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him?—or if thy

transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? —if thou be righteous what givest thou him? or what receiveth he at thy hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man." But he hates sin, as contrary to his holy nature, hiding his glory from his intelligent creatures, and, in proportion to the extent of its prevalence, tending to the destruction of the order and happiness of the universe. When we speak of *hatred* as existing in the infinite mind, we ought, it is true, to beware of associating with it any idea of passion, or turbulent emotion. But to make it a question whether God be displeased with sin, and with sinners, is to confound good and evil together; to divest the human mind of all its salutary fears of judgment to come; and to dispute the propriety of God's own language on this subject. In the scriptures we find it affirmed that God is "*angry with the wicked every day*," that he "*hateth all the workers of iniquity;*" "that he hath revealed from heaven *his wrath* against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;" and the children of disobedience are denominated "*children of wrath.*" When God, on the other hand, forgives iniquity, he is, in perfect consistency with other expressions, represented as "*turning from the fierceness of his anger, and taking away all his wrath;*" as "*not retaining all his anger* for ever, because he delighteth in mercy;" as "*pacified*" towards the objects of his forgiveness "notwithstanding all they have done:" and they who before were "*children of wrath,*" are described as then saying with holy and humble joy, "O Lord, I will praise thee; for though thou wast angry with me, *thine anger is turned away.*" This is PROPITIATION; and it is *in Christ Jesus*, as we have already seen, that God is propitious to sinners.

The *righteousness* of God is *declared*, or made manifest, by the infliction of the penalty of transgression on the person of Jesus Christ, as the voluntary surety and sub-

stitute of the guilty. This, it is freely admitted, is not according to the precise letter of the divine law; for that, like every other, requires, of course, the personal punishment of the offender. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But the *spirit* of the law is as fully preserved, the ends of judgment as effectually answered, the dignity and authority of the Divine Lawgiver as completely secured, by the sufferings of a sufficient and voluntary substitute, as by the sufferings of the guilty transgressors themselves. Nay, if, as in the case before us, this willing surety is, in nature and dignity, transcendently superior to the sinner in whose room he appears, these ends may be answered with even more impressive effect in the one way than the other.

The righteous God has given to his creatures a righteous law, accompanied with the threatening of a righteous penalty. If the law and the penalty were both originally righteous, they must remain immutably so. If the law, when given, required no more than what is right, how can it, without bringing a reflection on the perfect wisdom and unchanging rectitude of the Divine Being, ever require less? If the penalty, by the threatening of which obedience was originally enforced, contained in it no more than what is strictly just, how can this penalty, without giving rise to the same kind of reflection, be remitted, or even mitigated?

The two great ends of *public justice*, are the glory of God, and, in connection with it, the general good of his creatures. It is essentially necessary to the attainment of these ends, that the authority of the government of God should be supported, in all its extent, as inviolably sacred; that one jot, or one tittle, should in no wise pass from the law; that no sin of any kind, or of any degree should appear as venial; that if any is pardoned, it should be in such a way as, while it displays the divine mercy, shall at the same time testify the divine abhorrence of his sins.

All this is gloriously effected in the gospel, by means of ATONEMENT; by the substitution of a voluntary surety, even of him whose name is Immanuel, to bear the curse of the law, in the room of the guilty. In his substitution, we see displayed in a manner unutterably affecting and awful, the *holy purity* of the divine nature; for no testimony can be conceived more impressive of infinite abhorrence of sin, than the sufferings and death of the Son of God. Here, too, we behold the *immutable justice* of the divine government, *that sin must be punished,*—that if the sinner is pardoned, it must be in a way that *marks* and *publishes the offence.* In inflicting the sentence against transgression, on a voluntary and all sufficient surety, JEHOVAH, while he clears the sinner, does not clear his sins; although clothed with the thunders of vindictive justice against trangression, he wears to the transgressor the smile of reconciliation and peace; dispensing the blessings of mercy from the throne of holiness, he appears in the character, equally lovely and venerable, of

—— the sinner's friend,
And sin's eternal foe!

In this way, then, all the ends of *public justice* are fully answered; and while the riches of mercy are displayed for the encouragement of sinners to return to God, the solemn lesson is at the same time taught by a most convincing example, that rebellion cannot be persisted in with impunity; and motives are thus addressed to the fear of evil, as well as to the desire of good:—such a view of the Divine Being is presented in the cross, as is precisely calculated to inspire, and to maintain (to maintain, too, with a power which will increase in influence the more closely and seriously the view is contemplated) the two great principles of a holy life,—the LOVE and the FEAR of God; filial attachment, freedom, and confidence, combined with humble reverence and holy dread.

While it appears a most important scriptural truth, that something equivalent, in the eye of divine justice, to the punishment of the sinner, was, in the view and for the reasons which have been stated, absolutely necessary for his escape, I do not think there is any thing in the word of God, that warrants the representation that has been given, by some of the friends of this doctrine, as if the sufferings of Christ formed what they call an exact equivalent—neither less nor more—for the sins of all who shall be saved by his atonement. This sentiment seems derogatory to the infinite dignity of the sufferer, and the consequent infinite value of this sacrifice. The sufferings of the Son of God ought not to be brought in comparison, as a display of divine righteousness, with even the eternal sufferings of millions of his creatures. The idea of exact equivalent proceeds on the supposition, that the sufferings of Christ possessed just as much virtue as is sufficient for the salvation of all who shall be saved; whose precise proportion of punishment he is conceived to have borne, according to the guilt even of each particular sin.

The mediation of Christ, I am disposed to view as a grand general manifestation of "the righteousness of God," by which the claims of justice are, in the spirit of them, fully satisfied, and the glory of the attribute thus maintained, in the exercise of mercy:—a *general remedy*, admitting *according to the divine pleasure and purpose*, of a *particular application*.

There is an obvious and important difference between the *sufficiency* of any remedy and its *efficiency*. The former arises from the nature of the remedy itself; the latter depends on its being applied. The former, therefore, may be even infinite, while the latter is purposely limited. The blood of Christ may be infinite in its atoning *value*, and yet limited in its atoning *efficacy;* sufficient for the salvation of *all*, and yet effectual to the salvation of comparatively *few*.

It is in this view then that God appears in the gospel testimony, in that view of his character which is to us the most deeply interesting of all the lights in which he has been pleased to make himself known,—as "*the just God* and *a Saviour.*" It is in the cross of Christ, in the work which *he* finished when he "bowed his head and gave up the ghost," that "mercy and truth meet together—that righteousness and peace embrace each other." To the sinner it is, from first to last, a free salvation. God's instituting any means at all, for securing the honor of his righteousness in bestowing pardon on the guilty, when his character, as the just God, would have remained unimpeachable, had he consigned all transgressors to the doom which they merited, was, in itself, an act of free unsolicited grace.

It has been asserted by some, that the doctrine of *atonement* is incompatible with that of *free forgiveness.* Let these words of the apostle, contained in the verse immediately preceding the text, silence, as they ought to do, every such objection. He here distinctly affirms that the justification of the sinner is *free*, that is *without any cause in him;* that is, *by grace;* that is, as an act of *sovereign unmerited favor*—and yet, that it is *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* In other places also he uses language of exactly the same import:—"*in whom* we have redemption *by his blood*, the forgiveness of sins, *according to the riches of his grace.*" It is evident, from such passages, that Paul perceived not the inconsistency, which the refinement of modern objectors presumes it has discovered. And I think we may be perfectly satisfied to be in the same mistake as an inspired apostle. It has likewise been objected to this doctrine, that it can never be reconciled with the justice of God, to permit the innocent to suffer for the guilty. Perhaps it should be enough to remind those who urge this objection, not only that the substitution and sufferings of Christ were entirely *volun-*

tary, but that according to the view which we take of his person, *they could not possibly have been otherwise;* inasmuch as, previously to his assuming the form of a servant, he had no superior who could lay him under any obligation, nor would he, therefore, have violated any obligation, had he never acted the part he did. His *own* will alone could bind him. His "becoming flesh" was an act of sovereign condescension; and in all that he endured in the nature which he had voluntarily assumed, he was a willing sufferer.

But let me take up the objection in another light. According to the terms in which it is expressed, it proceeds on the supposition of the innocence of the sufferer. To this then admitted! One can hardly tell whether our opponents admit it or not. They can certainly find no "fault in this man." Yet one presumes to speak of him as "*fallible and peecable;*" another says, we have no *sufficient data by which to determine whether during his private, as well as his public life, he was free from sin or not; and that it is to us a matter of no material consequence!* But "what saith the scripture?" "Such an high-priest became us, who is *holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners*, and made higher than the heavens: who *needeth not daily as those high-priests*, to offer up sacrifice, *first for their own sins*, and then for the people's."—"He *did no sin*, neither was guile found in his mouth."—"He was manifested to take away our sins; and *in him was no sin.*" Are not these declarations sufficient to satisfy every mind that feels itself bound by the authority of the scriptures? Taking for granted, then, the *perfect innocence* of Jesus Christ, let us consider *the fact* precisely as it stands. Here is *an innocent person suffering;* suffering both in body and in mind (if we are to judge from his own expressions of inward agony, and from the effects of that agony on his bodily frame), in a degree unprecedented and inconceivable. Let the ob-

jector, then, account for this strange phenomenon in the government of a righteous God. Why, we ask, does he suffer? Not on his own account. The supposition of innocence forbids this; for all suffering arises from sin. Why then does he suffer? To confirm, by evincing his sincerity, the truth of his testimony, and to set before us an example of patience? The objector forgets himself when he alleges this as the cause. Let him recollect, that this is still suffering *for us—for our good.* Let him answer, therefore, his own objection. If it be just in God to allow the innocent to suffer for *these* ends, why should it be unjust in him to allow the innocent to suffer *for another end*—even for the end which we allege to have been the true cause of these sufferings, on the same person, for an end *obviously and incalculably superior?* The fact of an innocent sufferer being once admitted, the only scriptural, and in my apprehension, the only rational (because the only adequate) reason of the fact, and solution of the difficulty rising from it, is—"God made him who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." So strongly does the matter appear, in this light to my mind, that I should almost affirm the very existence of the fact, to be of itself a sufficient evidence of the doctrine.

It has further been objected, that when in the New Testament *reconciliation* is spoken of, it is not the *reconciliation of God to sinners*, but of *sinners to God:* as in the following instances:—"All things are of God who hath *reconciled us to himself* by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation: to wit, that God was in (or by) Christ, *reconciling the world unto himself*, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us; we pray (men) in Christ's stead, *be ye reconciled unto God:* for he hath made him who knew no sin to be

sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. If, when we were enemies, we were *reconciled to God* by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

I need not enlarge on this. Two or three brief observations will be sufficient to show the fallacy of the objection. *In the first place*, we have already seen that, in many parts of scripture, words and phrases which are, in their meaning, perfectly *equivalent* with 'reconcile' and 'reconciliation,' are used respecting the state of God's regard towards sinful creatures; as when he is said to be *pacified* and to have his *anger turned away*. It is not about the *word* we dispute, but about the *thing*. *Secondly:* In the scriptures, the verb *to reconcile* is used when the person said *to be reconciled* is not the *offended* party, but the *offender;* in which cases it manifestly signifies not the removal of enmity in the heart of him who is said *to be reconciled*, but the averting of displeasure, and the obtaining of favor, in the bosom of him *to whom he is reconciled*. For example (Matt. v. 23, 24.) "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first *be reconciled to thy brother*, and then come and offer thy gift." The person addressed is not supposed to have any thing against his brother, but to recollect that his brother has something against him. His brother is the aggrieved party. Yet it is not said, "*Reconcile thy brother to thee*," but "*Be reconciled to thy brother*." The former, however, is evidently what is meant, "Make peace with thy brother,"—by becoming acknowledgment and submission, regain his lost favor, and restore the exercise of mutual affection. Agreeably to this view of its meaning, when sinners are said to be *reconciled to God*, the expression includes in it not merely the relinquishment of their enmity against him, but also the turning away of his displeasure against

them. It means, in short, the bringing of the parties into a state of mutual friendship. *Thirdly:* That this is the case is clear, from the very passages in the Epistle to the Corinthians, and to the Romans, before quoted. In the former of these passages, God's "*reconciling the world unto himself* by Jesus Christ," is explained by his "*not imputing their trespasses unto them:*" that is, by forgiveness he brings sinners into a state of favor and acceptance with himself. As to the latter passage, its connection with the preceding verse is sufficient to show the meaning of *being reconciled* is there the same; much more, then, being now *justified by his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him; for if when we were enemies, we were *reconciled to God by the death of his Son*, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." If *reconciliation to God*, by the death of his Son, is not here *inclusive*, at least of being *justified by his blood*, there is neither continuity nor conclusiveness in the Apostle's reasoning.

Lastly, it has been alleged that the whole of this scheme of atonement is *unnecessary*—a useless incumbrance; for that God might, with perfect propriety, forgive sinners, *upon their repentance*, without any such additional consideration.

What the infinitely wise and righteous God might, or might not with propriety do in such a case, it hardly, perhaps, comes within our province to determine. Our safest and most becoming way of proceeding, in such circumstances, is, I should think, to form our judgment from the fact, to consider what God has actually done, and thence to conclude what was or what was not proper for him to do.

If God could, with perfect consistency and propriety, have pardoned sin without any such atonement as we believe has been made for it, we may, with great safety conclude, from what we know of his wisdom and of his

goodness, that the atonement would never have been heard of; for a *wise* being does nothing in vain, and a *good* being inflicts no suffering in vain. Surely when the blessed Redeemer, perfectly pure and holy, and the object of unmingled approbation and love, thrice prayed in agony of spirit, that *if it were possible* the cup might pass from him; he would never have been permitted to drink it—to drink it even to its bitterest dregs, had not his drinking it been indispensable; had it not been necessary to the reconciliation of justice and mercy, in their exercise towards guilty men.

Reason, to say the least of it, can arrive at no certain conclusion on this subject; and it becomes us to submit with grateful humility to the way of acceptance made known in the gospel. Repentance *is inseparably connected* with forgiveness; but it is not the *procuring cause*, the *meritorious ground*. *This* is to be found only in the perfect obedience, and atoning death of the Son of God; and apart from faith in him, and dependance upon his righteousness and sacrifice, as the foundation of acceptance, there exists no repentance that is genuine and scriptural.

I must now hasten forward to the remaining observations, which must be illustrated with great brevity.

III. THE GROUND ON WHICH THE PARDON OF SIN HAS BEEN BESTOWED, HAS, IN EVERY AGE, AND UNDER EVERY DISPENSATION, BEEN THE SAME.

This observation is founded on the expression used in verse 25th, "*for the remission of sins that are past* (that is, *which were formerly committed) through* (or *in) the forbearance of God.*"

These words evidently express the *retrospective efficacy* of the blood of Christ; its efficacy as the procuring cause of forgiveness to believers who lived before his coming in the flesh. God had before that time *remitted sin;* and the words in question might perhaps be more strictly ren-

dered, *because of* the remission (or passing by) of sins formerly committed in the forbearance of God," the sentiment expressed being apparently this, "that the passing of sins *at that time*, when no adequate atonement had been made, might have given occasion for the impeachment of the divine righteousness; and therefore this display of the righteousness of God was in due time made, as that to which there had all along been a prospective regard (as to a predetermined event) in the previous exercise of pardoning mercy." This view seems to be confirmed by the emphatical expression, "*at this time*," in the 25th verse, which seems to refer to something which required to be done *now*, as having been acted upon in the time preceding.

The truth then, which is contained in these words, is a highly important, and deeply interesting one; that throughout the whole period of time, from Adam to Christ, the forgiveness of sins was granted "*through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;*" that God never was "*the justifier*" of any but such as "*believed in Jesus*," or, as the original words literally mean, "*were of the faith of Jesus.*" This faith, it is true, must of necessity have corresponded, in clearness of vision, and in strength of conviction, to the degree of light vouchsafed at the time; but it was not the less, on account of the comparative obscurity of the revelation, for, in the nature of things, it *could not* regard its object, *further than that object was revealed.* In passing by sin, therefore, in the ages preceding the fulness of time, it appears that God (to whom the future is as certain as the past; a purpose yet to be executed, as sure as what has already been done, "one day" in this respect "as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day;") it appears, I say, that God then granted the remission of sins "*in his forbearance*," that is, while he was, as it were, *waiting* for the fulness of his time, and was regarding as the ground of his merciful procedure, the work which was

then to be done, the atonement which was then to be made. "At this time," the time, for wise reasons, chosen and appointed by himself; "he *declared* his righteousness," by the advent and atonement of Christ, that he might be just in having *formerly* justified, and just in *now continuing* to justify "those who are *of the faith of Jesus.*"

What an interesting and impressive view does this give us, my brethren, of the efficacy of the Redeemer's sacrifice. "What is a man profited," said he himself, "if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? If the salvation of one individual is thus unspeakably valuable, how great must be the preciousness of that offering by which there are redeemed unto God—redeemed from everlasting destruction, and raised to the enjoyment of everlasting life and glory, "a multitude which no man can number!" That countless multitude which John saw in vision, was not only composed of men "of every people, and kindred, and tongue, and nation," but of men of every successive period of time, from the day when man was doomed to return to dust, 'till the day when "death shall be swallowed up in victory." Then "Adam shall salute his youngest born." Yet the song of this redeemed company is *one*. "The righteous Abel," the earliest victim of mortality shall join in the same song with the last of the children of God that falls asleep in Jesus. All having "washed their robes, and made them white, in the same blood," shall sing together without a feeling or tone of discord, "Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb!"

IV. My *fourth* proposition was, that "AN INTEREST IN THE PARDONING MERCY OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST, IS OBTAINED BY FAITH."

"Whom God hath set forth as a propitiation through *faith* in his blood, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who *believeth* in Jesus." This is the unvarying

language of the Bible. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that *whosoever believed in him*, should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." "He that *believeth on the Son* hath everlasting life; but he that *believeth not on the Son*, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." To multiply passages to the same effect would be endless. To ALL, of every description, who are interested in the virtue of this atonement, faith is alike the *medium* of their interest.

The chief reason why faith is made the medium of justification, is stated in the 16th verse of the following chapter, "wherefore it is of faith, *that it might be by grace;*" and the simpler, consequently, our views are, of the nature of justifying faith, the clearer will our perception be of the reign of GRACE in our salvation. For the Apostle in these words, represents it as appointed by God, to be the medium of a saving interest in the atonement, for the express reason, that it is a medium which from its very nature, sets aside all works from forming any part of the ground of acceptance, precludes all self-complacent boasting, and secures the entire glory to his own FREE GRACE.

The reasonableness of making faith, or the belief of the testimony of God, concerning his Son, the medium of interest in the salvation which that testimony reveals, must at once be apparent to every reflecting mind. No one, surely, can conceive it to be right, that the man who rejects the gospel, refusing to own it as a message from heaven, should nevertheless partake, equally with those who gladly embrace it as such, the precious blessings which it reveals; that he who persists in despising the atonement, and in slighting and vilifying the great salvation wrought by the Son of God, should yet experience the saving efficacy of his blood. It is the sovereign and irreversible

appointment of that God with whom we have to do, that "he that believeth not shall be condemned." The sinner who esteems the blood of Jesus an all-sufficient atonement for sin, and who, as ruined and hopeless, seeks forgiveness and acceptance on the ground of that atonement, "shall in no wise be cast out," for God is "the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." But the sacrifice can have no saving virtue to any who refuse to acknowledge its necessity, or to confide in its merits.

This position I advance, not with inconsiderate levity; not with scornful indifference about the safety of my fellow-sinners; not for the sake of maintaining the consistency of a human system, but from a deep conviction of its truth, and a solemn, heartfelt impression of its unutterable importance. To every imputation of uncharitable harshness my answer is, "to the law and to the testimony." By this let the sentiment be impartially tried.

V. My last observation was, that in RESTING OUR HOPES OF FORGIVENESS ON THE ATONING SACRIFICE OF CHRIST WE BUILD ON A SURE FOUNDATION.

This observation is founded on two circumstances—the dignity of the person who is set forth in the gospel as the true propitiator; and the supreme authority of Him by whom he is set forth, as the object of faith, and the ground of acceptance, "CHRIST JESUS, whom God has set forth." When we consider the divine dignity of the Mediator between God and man, the "great high-priest of our profession;" when we are assured that our hope is founded on a work that has been finished, and on a sacrifice that has been offered by him whose name is Immanuel, we possess a feeling of security which nothing else whatever can impart. "*It is* CHRIST *that died*"—"*he offered himself up.*" It is true that the human nature alone could obey, and could suffer. But if it be also true, that the human nature of him who obeyed and suffered, was associated in his one person with the divine, that man's mind must be singularly

constituted, who does not perceive the difference between what is done and suffered by an ordinary mortal, and what is done and suffered by man in union with Deity, and who triumphs in the discovery, that this can be no more after all than human sufferings. Upon such a principle as this, were a mighty monarch to perform an act of singular condescension and mercy, by voluntarily submitting to various sufferings, for the deliverance of the meanest of his subjects from existing or apprehended misery—it might be said, "*royalty* cannot act, *royalty* cannot suffer; it is the man only, and not the *king*, who acts and suffers; so that the actions and sufferings of the king should be considered in no other light than as the actions and sufferings of the meanest beggar." I am aware that all comparisons of this kind fall infinitely below the one which they are intended to illustrate, I have adduced this one, merely to show the futility of the principle upon which such objectors proceed.

The doctrine of the Divinity of Christ, then, which I have, in former discourses, been endeavouring to establish, is not, by any means, a useless, isolated truth;—a truth on which no other truths depend. Viewed in connection with the atonement, which it has been the object of this discourse to illustrate and to prove, it is that which imparted to all Jesus did and suffered for the salvation of a lost world, its peculiar value, and its saving efficacy; it is that which communicates their sublime grandeur to the doctrines of the cross, elevating them above all that "eye had seen, or ear heard, or that it had entered into the heart of man to conceive;" investing the whole Christian system with a radiant and heavenly glory, like that which beamed round the transfigured Saviour on the holy mount.

The second source of our security, in resting our hopes on this foundation, is, the authority by which it is here represented as revealed and sanctioned:—"*whom God hath set forth.*"

God hath set him forth partially, and with comparative obscurity, by the law and the prophets; and he now exhibits him in the Gospel, with all the clearness of explicit testimony, as "a propitiatory through faith in his blood." God was the Sovereign whom our sins had offended, and at whose mercy we consequently lay. He alone, when his creatures had "fallen by their iniquity," had a right to determine whether *any* remedy should be appointed for them at all, and what that remedy should be. If HE, therefore, has made known a ground of hope for the guilty, we cannot, surely, wish for a firmer security, or for any higher warrant, or encouragement, to rely on that ground with unshaken confidence. It is Jehovah that hath said, "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth on him shall not be ashamed." And we know what that foundation is,—"other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is, JESUS CHRIST."

It is with God as "the Judge of all" that we have to do; and when we tremble at the thought of his purity and justice, in anticipating our appearance at his dread tribunal, there is nothing that can impart peace to the troubled conscience, and hope to the sinking heart, but the word of that being himself to whom we have to render our account. Something which he has approved and accepted, and on which he has given us his authority to trust, is absolutely necessary to solid and satisfactory peace,—to peace of which the source will bear to be thought of and examined. This we have in the glorious Gospel, where "God hath set forth Christ as a propitiatory, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness in the remission of sins; that he might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." It is the assurance of this, that imparts the confidence of hope;—every thing besides this, leaves the mind distracted by uncertainty and doubt, or a prey to all the agonies of despair.

No question, then, on this subject can be conceived of greater importance than the question, "*What is the testimony of God, with regard to the ground of acceptance with himself?*" To discover the true answer to this question, let me beseech you to have recourse directly to the word of God. If you believe what is there testified, and imbibe the spirit of those holy men by whom that word was written, your language will be, and it will come from a glowing heart, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. I count all thing but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ: I count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God by faith. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God even his Father, to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen!"

CHAPTER V.

FIRST: PREPARATIONS TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT. SECOND: ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. THIRD: GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT.—FOURTH: EXTRAORDINARY SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

I. PREPARATIONS TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT. This most important doctrine regards every Christian believer; but thousands have come into the world, and tens of thousands have passed out of it, who have never enquired concerning these important truths. The Holy Spirit is

the author of all true spiritual consolation ; HE is therefore called the COMFORTER. HE removes distress ; and HE alone establishes peace in the soul. Does not the chief part of human misery arise from the predominance of impure desire, and malignant temper ?

Where meekness and gentleness, where temperance, patience, and forbearance, where the love of God and of man prevail, peace and joy must dwell as their attendant guests. But all these are " the fruits of the Spirit," and therefore such as are renewed by his grace, may be pronounced truly blessed. Thousands are rendered miserable, and think life itself an insupportable burden, under a conviction of their guilt, and of their liability to the fierce anger of Almighty God. How shall their conscience be pacified, and that horrible dread be removed ? Nothing will avail for the purpose, but the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and of him crucified ; and this knowledge is the gift of the Holy Ghost. " He will glorify me," said our Lord, " for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Only let the kingdom of God be set up within you, and as the happy consequence, you will experience joy in the Holy Ghost. Thousands have passed through the world, and have not so much as concerned themselves whether there *be* or *be not* a Comforter. " And Paul finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed ? and they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." Acts xix. 2. It was not until after the resurrection of our Lord, that the Holy Spirit was felt by the Apostles ; therefore those of the upper coast of Corinth, could hardly have heard that there was a Holy Ghost. But we who live in the nineteenth century, who have been educated in the Scripture covenant, and have been attenders on divine service, should in these latter times be acquainted with the Comforter, the Holy Ghost.

No man can kneel down and pray to the Father, except the Spirit be in him. To speak more explicitly. If a penitent pray in spirit and in truth, the Comforter is with him. Be guarded on these points, as the Holy Spirit does not always strive with man. If thy whole thought be not divided from, and brought out of the world, thou hast no part nor lot in the Holy Spirit; and except a man believe in the efficacy of our Saviour's atoning blood, he has no part in the matter.

O my dear friends, be guarded when you pray. Let not the world, nor sensual thoughts enter your minds. Draw a curtain over the things of the world. Cover them effectually. And when you have done so, open the everlasting doors of heaven; pray in spirit and in truth; and your Father who is in heaven, will hear your prayer, reward you openly, and give you the Comforter, even the Holy Ghost.

I have already shown you the great mystery of approaching your Eternal Father; and in those points alone the salvation of man is either lost or won. I will now endeavour to show the weakness and licentiousness of the human race. Men in the highest sphere of life should be very careful to approach the Church of God in modest apparel. Their conversation suited to the holy sabbath, for that day THE LORD hath set apart to be *dedicated* unto him: that the inward man should come out from the world, to edify and admonish those in a lower sphere, and to improve the inward man. When our conversation is cleansed from all filthiness, then, and not till then, you approach the Holy Spirit: but alas, the world is pregnant with evil and grievous disorders, *and one evil begets another*. I am sorry to have to remark, that in a great number of congregations, there is a practice very disgusting to pious Christians, and which unveils the weakness of human nature. It would appear that they think the sabbath dedicated to two grand purposes. First, that the

body should be dressed in the first fashion of the season; and secondly, that during the time of divine service, those fashionable persons should be closely examining others, to see if any one exceed them in dress.

It is distinctly observed in Scripture, that "no man can serve two masters." Now, my dear friends, can any of these last mentioned taste of the Holy Spirit? Here we discover why it is that the Unitarians, as well as numerous other sects, are ready to say, "we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." That *spirit of pride and affectation*, that spirit of self-righteousness, cloaked in a garb of fashion, must completely be done away. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit; let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you; which ye have of God: and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. JONAH made no apology when he was commanded a second time by the Almighty, to go and preach to the Ninevites. When the Spirit of God is with the preacher or writer, no apology is required, but the pure word of God will flow as the rain from the heavens; and likewise, except ye repent, and receive the Spirit, ye can in no wise expect forgiveness. "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" The temple in which the Holy Spirit dwells, is the Lord's; and why will ye rob him who has "bought you with a price."

Is there ever an unconverted sinner that hears these vehement words of God,—is there ever a man or woman that is a stranger to the renewing, sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit? Hearken then, to the voice of your Maker, and turn to him in Christ, without delay. Would you know the will of God? Why this is *his* will, that you presently turn. Shall the LIVING GOD send so earnest a

message to his creatures, and not be obeyed? Hearken then, all ye that live after the flesh: THE LORD that gave you your breath, hath sent a messenger from heaven, and this is his message, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?"

O Jesus, source of calm repose,
Thy like, nor man, nor angel knows.

Let us know Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in his ascension into heaven, and in his session at God's right hand, as well as in his mission of the Holy Ghost. These are points of great use. If these transactions had not occurred, where had we been? Here is an object of admiration. Indeed the very angels at the sight of it stood admiring and adoring. It took up their hearts, and astonished their understanding. Come then, O my soul, do thou take a view of that which they admire. The design concerns thee in particular, and therefore closely study this argument, and know it for thyself. Study first the ascension of Christ, how, and whither, and why he ascended. Secondly, study the session of Christ at God's right hand. O the riches of that spiritual, heavenly knowledge!

Study the mission of the Holy Ghost. Not a circumstance in it but deserves thy study. What endeavours have there been to dive into the secrets of nature! what volumes have been written on physics, metaphysics, and mathematics! and is not this subject, CHRIST,—are not these subjects, Christ's ascension, Christ's mission of the Holy Spirit, of more value and benefit than all the others? Come, study those parts of the Bible wherein these are written. There is not a line, nor expression of Christ in the Scripture, but contains matter enough for a whole age to comment on. Thou needest not leave old principles for new discoveries, for in those very particulars thou mightest find *successive sweetness* to all ETERNITY.

II. ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

It is necessary while upon this important subject, to divest our minds of all the pre-conceived and fallacious notions which they may have imbibed, from having perused the works of idle theorists, or false visionaries. If we were to allow our imagination free play, it would instantly launch forth upon the illimitable oceans of duration and space, and soon be bewildered and lost in the immeasurable depths of eternity and immensity. But we must not forget that human powers are confined within narrow limits, so that while our wishes remain undiminished, we are instructed to moderate our ideas. Notwithstanding this, "little haughty ignorance" has dared to tax "*creative wisdom*," to call in question the word of the Most High, and even to doubt the propriety of his actions and works, while he is puzzled to account for the formation of a single atom of matter,

> "As if upon a full-proportion'd dome,
> On swelling columns heav'd, the pride of art!
> A critic fly, whose feeble ray scarce spreads
> An inch around, with blind presumption bold,
> Should dare to tax the structure of the whole."

It is our intention to confine the present discourse to the first operation of the Spirit; that operation by which he "opens the heart" to the reception of the truth as it is in Jesus, and commences the Divine life in the soul—his agency in what we have Scripture warrant for denominating *regeneration*. All his subsequent influence is only a continued exercise of the same power by which he prepares and takes possession of his temple. If from the authority of the Scriptures, and other legitimate sources of evidence, we can establish the reality and necessity of the direct action of the Holy Spirit, influencing us by the faith of the gospel, and producing the *first dawning* of the

divine life, the inference will be obvious, that the same energy will carry it on to perfection. The establishment of this point will illustrate the remainder of the discussion, and take from it, in some measure, its argumentative form.

The declaration of the apostle Paul, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," we think, expresses much the same important truth as the following of our Lord's to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

In the one Godhead, although subsisting in three persons, there has been, from eternity, *infinite knowledge*, and consequently perfect and invariable *unity of mind and counsel.*

In the scheme of our redemption, however, the three persons in this one Godhead are represented as performing each his appropriate part of that glorious work, in the eternal design of which they were necessarily one. The ordinary distinction pervades the account which is given in the Scriptures of this wonderful scheme. The Father appears as commissioning or sending the Son—the Son as coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, and finishing his work of atonement on the cross;—and the Father having declared his approbation of the finished work, his acceptance of the atoning sacrifice, by raising the man Christ Jesus from the grave, and exalting him to glory—then comes the appropriate work of the Spirit, who is sent by the Father in the name and for the sake of the Son, with the express view of giving effect, in the souls of men, to the work of salvation which the Son had finished.

By the influence of the Holy Spirit, renovation of the heart, or sanctification is achieved; the truth believed, or faith in Jesus Christ, being the medium of interest and means by which this blessed effect is produced; and the knowledge and belief of this truth, are essential to its renewing influence; for it cannot be supposed to have

any truly gracious or saving efficacy, except it is understood and believed.

Let the mind ponder upon these subjects. Let the "senses be locked up, and the airy wings of imagination repressed." "Let reason reign alone," and then revolve these important truths till they may be understood and believed. 'Tis then that the workings of the Holy Spirit will be felt in the soul, and that Saviour, who suffered for us, will appear to be "fairer than the children of men," "the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely," who before appeared in our eyes, as "a root out of the dry ground, having no form, nor comeliness, nor beauty, why he should be desired." This change of sentiments and feelings, we affirm is represented in the scriptures, as the effect of divine influence, of the influence of the Spirit of God. We would remark that the figures employed by scripture, strongly represent the nature and magnitude of the change which takes place when a sinner "receives the love of truth that he may be saved." This change is represented as a *new birth*, a *resurrection from the dead*, a *new creation*. "And (that ye may know) what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead;" "and you hath he quickened, which were dead in trespasses and sins;" "but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ:" "Wherefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new."

It is very evident that such figures as these must express a change, not external, superficial, and partial, but internal, radical, and total; a change of mind, of heart, and of life; of views, of principles, and of conduct. And it is not the less evident, that, as the things in nature to

which the change is compared, require divine energy for their accomplishment, so must the change itself. This, indeed, in several passages, is most pointedly affirmed.

The whole of such language proceeds on the supposition of the deep and radical corruption of the human heart; that corruption which, although it assumes a vast variety of aspects, being modified in its influence on the characters of men, by an inconceivable diversity of circumstances, is yet, in its general nature, the same, and operates universally in opposition to that truth, which abases to the dust the pride of man, and which "crucifies the flesh, with its affections and lusts."

The apostle Paul, has summed up in one expression, all the varieties of human corruption; "*the carnal mind* IS ENMITY AGAINST GOD." The whole context shows, that by the carnal mind, or mind of flesh, he means the mind of man previously to his being "*renewed in the spirit of his mind.*" In the first verse of the chapter, he remarks, "those who are in *Christ Jesus*, walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," being thus distinguished from others who "walk after the flesh," "minding the things of the flesh." This is a marked distinction which pervades the whole passage, that between *renewed* and *unrenewed*, those who *have* and those who *have not* received the Spirit. The Apostle does not enter into a detail of the many carnalities with which the human mind may be corrupted, but at once pronounces every one to be "after the flesh," who is *not* "after the Spirit," and they who are not after the Spirit to be in that depraved and ungodly state which he denominates, as "*enmity against God.*"

Out of this view of the human heart, in its corrupt state, arises a weighty argument for the necessity of divine influence in order to its change. The idea of self-change, seems to be somewhat contradictory, for how can a principle of evil convert itself into a principle of good? How can enmity ever change itself into a principle of love;

or hatred of God, of its own accord, choose to love God? Is not this to suppose a principle acting in diametrical opposition to its proper nature, and invariable tendency?

When the Apostle speaks of "*enmity against God,*" he must mean enmity against *his true character.* If the enmity only arose from false views of God, and required but the change of these, that it might give place to love, it could not be said to be enmity against God at all. It would be enmity against that which God *is not.* It would therefore, in fact, be of the nature of love to God; for hatred of what God *is not,* is negative or hypothetical love to what God is, a just exhibition of the divine character to the mind, being all that is requisite to call it into exercise in a direct and positive state. This certainly is not what Paul meant to express. Such, assuredly, were not his views of the tendencies and likings of human nature. He knew full well what the carnal mind was, when he stated it to be "enmity against God." Paul, unlike the rest of the apostles, had been brought up in the very midst of the splendour and extravagant luxury of the Romans, which was then arriving at that height, which ultimately ruined its empire. He knew from experience, the influence of the world, with its pomps and vanities, upon the mind of man; he knew how impossible it was for a votary to the pleasures of that world, a servant of Mammon, even in the least degree, to allow the influence of the Holy Spirit to predominate in his heart, without which he is declared to be at "enmity against God."

He is continually battling with the Spirit, which worketh within him; for no sooner does an individual do an evil action, than the Holy Spirit reminds him of it, and he experiences a twinge of conscience, which, spite of himself, causes him to feel uneasy; he endeavours to quiet its workings by a thousand worldly occupations or amusements—but all is of no avail, it will not let him rest, the hideousness of the last sin is still staring him in the face at

every turn; even should he fly to the jovial board, and endeavour to steep his mind in oblivion by swallowing the intoxicating draught, even in the midst of revelry and laughter, while the giddy and light-hearted throng that surrounds him is hastening down the stream of pleasure, the memory of his transgressions, the horror of his sinfulness, falls heavy and damp upon his soul, and a superior power continually thunders in his ear "repent! lest thou likewise perishest;" but his mind being carnal, he listeneth not to the voice of warning; he is too much enthralled in the meshes which Satan has intertwined even with his very heart-strings, to attend to what he knows he ought; so he still keeps whirling forward, waging a miserable war with that Being who would fain conduct him to happiness; "at enmity with that God" who invites him to a mansion in the skies, till his "ears having waxed dull of hearing," the Spirit ceases to strive with him, upon which he heedlessly plunges headlong into what he vainly imagines is the pool of pleasure, but which he soon finds to be that dark and bitter stream from which so few are ever extricated, that stream of wickedness which leads to the gloomy gulph of perdition.

It may perhaps be objected to this view of the workings of the Holy Spirit, that it is disparaging to the word of God, implying as it does, its inadequacy to the work of converting the sinner.

The fallacy of these opinions may be sufficiently evinced by the following quotations from Dr. Wardlaw on this subject.

First: "We cannot justly be considered as disparaging the word of God, when we give it, in this matter, *the place which it assigns itself.* If the scriptures represent the gospel as a *means* or *instrument*, we do not underrate its value, or its power, when we view it or speak of it in this light." *Secondly:* "The word is not disparaged, when, as

an instrument, it is acknowledged to be eminently *fitted for its end.* That cannot be considered as disparaged, which is represented as fully answering the purpose *for which it is intended.* It is wrong indeed in point of expression to speak of the word of God as a dead letter; for the word of God is *quick (living)* and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Yet there is no inconsistency in saying, that this view of the divine word assumes, or supposes the accompanying influence of the Holy Spirit. The word of God is "the sword of the Spirit." And we no more derogate from the excellence and efficacy of the word, when we affirm that it cannot *pierce*, and *divide*, and *lay open*, except as used by the power of the Spirit, than we should detract from the excellence of the best tempered sabre, by saying it can do no execution, unless wielded by the arm of the warrior."

Thirdly: The disparagement attaches not to the word of God, but to the nature of man. Certainly no considerations can be conceived more powerfully persuasive, none more admirably fitted for subduing to submission and grateful affection the rebellious heart of man, than the exhibition given in the gospel, of the love and grace of the Godhead in the mediation of Jesus Christ. This is, in every view, inconceivably more touching, and melting, and overpowering to the heart, than the views of the gospel, (if according to these views it merited the name) which are held by our Unitarian opponents. And when we admit that even this will not, of itself, unaccompanied by divine energy, overcome the obduracy of the will and affections of unregenerate men, we throw no disparaging reflection on the gospel of God; but we freely acknowledge that it bears hard (alas! that it should be so justly hard) on the nature which we possess in our fallen state.

The word, if pondered and weighed by the influence of the Spirit in our hearts, produces the effect so necessary to our salvation, a regeneration and change of heart.

When speaking of the Spirit of God working within a sinner, and prompting him to repentance, we do not mean to imply that he can ever be radically converted without means; this would be to agree with all the extravagancies of that wild enthusiasm, which has been so often mistaken by its votaries for true religion. The scriptures give us sufficient warrant for asserting, that the *word* must go hand in hand with the Spirit, and that no man can be a subject to its regenerating power, who is ignorant of the truths made known in the gospel. We are fully convinced that no man is free altogether from the workings of the Spirit, yet it is obviously necessary that he be made to feel the value of the great scheme of his salvation, before he can sufficiently see how greatly he has sinned, to bring forth any "fruits meet for repentance;" before he can undergo the process (if we may be allowed so to term it,) of regeneration. We may further observe, that the help promised us from the Spirit does not exclude the necessity of the use of means on our part; the Spirit, though it works *in* us, requires so much exertion on our part, that it may work *by* us, being a duty on our part, and a grace on his. It is requisite that by diligent watching and prayer, by continual remembrance of the mercies that have been extended to us, through the continued watchfulness and bounty of Jehovah, that we help the Spirit, and guard ourselves against temptation, and actual sin. We should ever keep in mind how much the flesh is at war with the Spirit, and endeavour by every means in our power, to strive against carnal allurements.

Some men have carnal views of the gospel, and instead of receiving it as "good news to all men," universal "glad tidings" of our salvation, regard it as nothing but a matter of history of the old rites, laws, and symbols of the

Jews, in the first instance, and, in the second, of the birth, miracles, and death of Jesus Christ, just given as a set of mere precepts left on record as rules for our conduct in life. St. Paul might have had these men in his eye, with the whole tribe of Socinians and Unitarians, when he made the following remark (1 Cor. ii. 14): "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him. Neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." This is precisely true. The great doctrines of faith, grace, righteousness, holiness, and the influence of the Holy Spirit, are all laid open before them, yet do they choose to disbelieve, or expunge them; or to put their own most silly and fallacious construction on them; and with blind arrogance and presumption, they dare to tell us, that the gospel does not agree with their ideas of reason; that they cannot comprehend the influence of the Holy Spirit; therefore they will act up to, and believe, but just what they think proper. Thus do petty men, worms of God's creation, and the creatures of his bounty, puffed up with the pride of the atom of short-sighted wisdom which he has mercifully granted to them, take upon themselves to turn it against himself, and to bring forward their puerile arguments to prove that his bountiful scheme of salvation is not right, because their feeble comprehension cannot take in all its parts. Let us ask these wise men, these keen sophists, and never-ending snarlers at the truths of the gospel, what part of God's works is it that you can understand? Have you ever dared to shoot out your imagination into the interminable limits of space? Can you comprehend it? Are not your thoughts lost in amazement ere you reach the limits of the comparative atom which forms our own universe? Perhaps you will dare, because you cannot comprehend this, to pronounce *it* wrong? No, you dare not! for your very reason, which prompts you to deny the other incomprehensible, *forces* you to acknowledge this, or you

would run the risk of being thought mad, were you to hold such strange doctrine. Eternity, or duration, will puzzle quite as much; yet God has not assisted the feebleness of your mind in one, more than the other. Yet you dare to deride the mysterious doctrines and truths of the scriptures, to set at nought the words of men and angels,—nay, of God himself; and what overwhelming weight of reason do you bring to counterbalance them? truly the weight of your own opinions, founded on arguments, deduced from the judgment and reason of arrogant man. We most willingly allow that the doctrines of the Holy Trinity are mysterious and difficult of solution, but, as before observed, so is every other thing connected with the incomprehensible Jehovah; and until man can find out how and where are laid the foundations of the heavens and the earth, let him not presume to carp at and vilify the doctrine of the Godhead, as set forth in the divine revelation.

It has been the practice of the Unitarians and Socinians, the latter especially, to say much on the progress of science, and of the lights which modern criticism has cast upon the holy scriptures, as if divinity were to be treated like a human science, and were capable of continued progressive improvement. They do not consider that all the articles of Christianity are so clearly revealed in the oracles of God, as to stand no need of their pigmy criticism in order to their illustration and establishment, and he has not left them involved in such ambiguous language as to admit of opposite interpretations. No; put the Bible into the hands of the most simple, and let him peruse it with attention,—he will put the best and plainest construction on every sentence,—the construction most consistent with the sweetest unadulterated truths of Christianity. On the contrary, the sects before named make use of the most unhappy ingenuity to cause *any* passage of scripture to *seem* to favor their tenets, and *many* pas-

sages as they pretend to explain them, are literally the most palpable nonsense,—tending rather to obscure the light of truth, and to bring revelation itself into contempt. We make bold to assert, that since the days of the primitive Christians, the golden age of religion, no new discoveries have been made in it, and those who go in search of such, involve both themselves and their followers in dangerous and destructive errors.

It is of importance for us to examine ourselves closely, that we may find out under what dominion we are. "If we sow to the flesh, we shall reap corruption; if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." Let us earnestly pray to the Almighty, that he will grant us his Spirit, which, indeed, he has promised to those who ask him:—thus shall we have a certain evidence that we are Christians indeed, "the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God:"—"being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

III. GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT.

With respect unto the dispensation of the Spirit towards believers, and his holy operations in them and upon them, there are sundry particular duties, whereof he is the immediate object presented unto them. And they are those whereby, on our part, we comply with him in his word of grace, whereby it is carried on and rendered useful to us. Now, whereas this Holy Spirit is a divine person, and he acts in all things towards us as a free agent, according unto his own will, the things enjoined us with respect unto him are those whereby we may carry ourselves aright towards such a one, namely, as he is an holy divine intelligent person, working freely in and towards us, for our good. And they are of two sorts; the first whereof are expressed in prohibitions of those things which are unsuited unto him, and his dealings with us; the latter in

commands for our attendance unto such duties as are peculiarly suited unto a compliance with him in his operations; in both which our obedience is to be exercised with a peculiar regard unto him. I shall begin with the first sort, and go over them in the instances given us in the scripture.

1. We have a negative precept to this purpose (Eph. iv. 30), μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, Grieve not the Holy Spirit. Consider who he is, what he hath done for you, how great your concern is in his continuance with you; and withal, that he is a free, infinitely wise, and holy agent, in all that he doth, who came freely unto you, and can withdraw from you, and grieve him not. It is the person of the Holy Spirit that is intended in the words, as appears, (1.) From the manner of the expression τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, that Holy Spirit.

(2.) By the works assigned unto him: for by him we are *sealed unto the day of redemption;* him we are not to grieve. The expression seems to be borrowed from Isaiah, lxiii. 10, where mention is made of the sin and evil here prohibited, והמה מרו ועצבו את רוח קדשו, *but they rebelled, and vexed the Holy Spirit.* בצע, is to *trouble*, and to *grieve*, and is used when it is done to a great degree. The LXX. render it here by παροξύνω, which is so to grieve, as also to irritate and provoke to anger and indignation, because it hath respect unto the rebellions of the people in the wilderness, which our apostle expresseth by παραπικραίνω, and παραπικρασμὸς, words of the same signification. To vex, therefore, is the heightening of grieving by a provocation unto anger and indignation; which sense is suited to the place and matter treated of, though the word signifies no more but *to grieve.* Gen. xlv. 5. 1 Kings, xix, 2.

Now, grief is here ascribed unto the Holy Spirit, as it is elsewhere unto God absolutely, (Gen. vi. 6) "*It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved*

him at his heart." Such affections and perturbations of mind are not ascribed unto God or the Spirit, but metaphorically. That intended, in such ascriptions, is to give us an apprehension of things, as we are not able to receive it. And the measure we take of them is their nature and effects in ourselves. What may justly grieve a good man, and what he will do when he is unjustly or undeservedly grieved, represent unto us what we are to understand of our own condition with respect unto the Holy Spirit, when he is said to be grieved by us: and grief, in the sense here intended, is a trouble of mind, arising from an apprehension of unkindness not deserved, of disappointments not expected, on the account of a near concernment in those by whom we are grieved. We may, therefore, see hence, what it is we are warned of, when we are enjoined not to grieve the Holy Spirit, as

1. There must be unkindness in what we do. Sin hath various respects towards God, of guilt and filth, and the like. These several considerations of it, have several effects; but that which is denoted, when it is said to grieve him, is unkindness, or that defect of an answerable love unto the fruits and testimonies of his love which we have received, that it is accompanied withal. He is the spirit of love—he is love All his acting towards us, and in us, are fruits of love, and they all of them leave an impression of love upon our souls. All the joys and consolations we are made partakers of in this world, arise from a sense of the love of God, communicated in an endearing way of love unto our souls. This requires a return of love and delight in all duties of obedience on our part. When, instead thereof, by our negligence and carelessness, or otherwise, we fall into those things or ways which he most abhors, he greatly respects the unkindness and ingratitude which is therein, and is therefore said to be grieved by us.

2. Disappointment in expectation. It is known that no

disappointment properly can befal the Spirit of God. It is utterly inconsistent with his prescience and omniscience. But we are disappointed, when things fall not out according as we justly expected they would, in answer unto the means used by us for their accomplishment; and when the means that God useth towards us do not, by reason of our sin, produce the effect they are suited unto, God proposeth himself as under a disappointment. So he speaks of his vineyard, *I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.* (Isaiah, v. 2) Now, disappointment causeth grief; as when a father hath used all means for the education of a child in any honest way or course, and expended much of his estate therein, if he, through dissoluteness or idleness, fail his expectation, and disappoint him, it fills him with grief. They are great things which are done for us by the Spirit of God. These all of them have their tendency unto an increase in holiness, light, and love. Where they are not answered, where there is not a suitable effect, there is that disappointment that causeth grief; especially is this so with respect unto some signal mercies A return in holy obedience is justly expected on their account; and where this is not, it is a thing causing grief. This are we here minded of, *Grieve not the Spirit whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* So great a kindness should have produced other effects than those there mentioned by the apostles.

3. The concernment of the Holy Spirit in us concurs to his being said to be grieved by us For we are grieved by them in whom we are particularly concerned. The miscarriages of others we can pass over without any such trouble. And there are three things that give us an especial concernment in others:—

(1.) Relation, as that of a father, and husband, or brother. This makes us to be concerned in, and consequently to be grieved for the miscarriages of them that

are related to us. So it is with the Holy Spirit; he hath undertaken the office of a comforter towards us, and stands in that relation to us. Hence he is so concerned in us as that he is said to be grieved with our sins, when he is not so at the sins of them unto whom he stands not in special relation.

(2.) Love gives concernment, and makes way for grief upon occasion of it. Those whom we love we are grieved for, and by; others may provoke indignation, but they cause not grief; I mean on their own account, for otherwise we ought to grieve for the sins of all. And what is the especial love of the Holy Ghost towards us, hath been declared. From what hath been spoken, it is evident that we are warned of what is enjoined unto us, when we are cautioned not to grieve the Holy Spirit, and how we may do so; for we do it,

(1.) When we are not influenced by his love and kindness, to answer his mind and will in all holy obedience, accompanied with joy, love, and delight. This he deserves at our hands—this he expects from us; and where it is neglected, because of his concernment in us, we are said to grieve him; for he looks not only for our obedience, but also that it be filled up with joy, love, and delight. When we attend unto duties with an unwilling mind, when we apply ourselves unto any acts of obedience, in a bondage or servile frame, we grieve him, who hath deserved other things of us.

(2.) When we lose and forget the sense and impressions of signal mercies received by him. So the apostle, to give efficacy unto his prohibition, adds the signal benefit which we receive by him, in that he seals us to the day of redemption; which what it is and wherein it doth consist, hath been declared. And whence it is evident, that he speaks of the Holy Spirit as dwelling in believers; for as such he seals them. Whereas, therefore, in and by sin, we forget the great grace, kindness, and condescension of

the Holy Spirit in his dwelling in us, and by various ways communicating of the love and grace of God unto us, we may be well said to grieve him. And certainly this consideration, together with that of the vile ingratitude and horrible folly there is in neglecting and defiling his dwelling place, with the danger of his withdrawing from us, on the continuance of our provocation, ought to be as effectual a motive unto universal holiness and constant watchfulness therein, as any that can be proposed unto us.

(3.) Some sins there are which in an especial manner above others do grieve the Holy Spirit. These our apostle expressly discourses of, 1 Cor. iii. 15—20, and by the connection of the words in this place, he seems to make corrupt communication, which always hath a tendency unto corruption of conversation, to be a sin of this nature. (Verses 29, 30.)

Secondly; that which we have rendered, to *vex him* (Isa. lxiii. 10), is but the heightening and aggravation of his being grieved by our continuance, and it may be obstinacy in those ways whereby he is grieved. For this is the progress of these things. If those whom we are concerned in, as children, or other relations, do fall into miscarriages and sins, we are first grieved by it; this grief in ourselves is attended with pity and compassion towards them, with an earnest endeavour for their recovery. But if, notwithstanding all our endeavours and the application of means for their inducement, they continue to go on froward in their ways, then are we vexed at them; which includes an addition of anger and indignation unto former sorrow or grief. Yet, in this posture of things, we cease not to attempt their cure, for a season, which, if it succeed not, but they continue in their obstinacy, then we resolve to treat with them no more, but leave them to themselves. And not only so, but upon our satisfaction of their resolution for a continuance in ways of sin and debauchery, we deal with them as their enemies, and labour to bring them

unto punishment; and, for our better understanding of the nature of our sin and provocation, this whole scheme of things is ascribed unto the Holy Ghost with respect unto them. How he is said to be grieved, and on what occasion, hath been declared.

Upon a continuance of those ways wherewith he is grieved, he is said to be vexed; that we may understand there is also anger and displeasure towards us. Yet he forsakes us not, yet he takes not from us the means of grace and our recovery. But if we discover an obstinacy in our ways, and an untractable perverseness, then he will cast us off, and deal with us no more for our recovery; and woe unto us when he shall depart from us! So, when the old world would not be brought to repentance, by the dispensation of the Spirit of Christ in the preaching of Noah, (1 Peter iii. 19, 20) God said thereon that his Spirit should give over, and not always *contend with man*, Gen. vi. 3. Now, the cessation of the operations of the Spirit towards man obstinate in the ways of sin, after he hath been long grieved and vexed, compriseth three things. (1.) A subduction from them of the means of grace, either totally, by the removal of their light and candlestick, all ways of the revelation of the mind and will of God unto them (Rev. ii. 5); or, as unto the efficacy of the word towards them, when the outward dispensation of it is continued, *so that hearing they shall hear, but not understand*, Isa. vi. 9, John xii. 40. For by the word it is that he strives with the souls and minds of men. (2.) A gracious forbearance of all chastisement, out of a gracious design to heal and recover them, Isa. i. 6. (3.) A giving them up unto themselves, or leaving them unto their own ways; which, although it seems only a consequent of the two former, and to be included in them, yet is there indeed in it a positive act of the anger and displeasure of God, which directly influenceth the event of things; for they shall be so given up unto their own hearts' lusts, as to be

bound in them as in chains of darkness unto following vengeance. Rom. i. 26—28. But this is not all; he becomes at length a professed enemy unto all obstinate sinners. (Isa. lxiii. 10.) *They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.* This is the length of his proceeding against obstinate sinners in this world. And herein also three things are included. (1st.) He comes upon them as an enemy, to spoil them. This is the first thing that an enemy doth when he comes to fight against any, he spoils them of what they have. Have such persons had any light or conviction, any gift or spiritual abilities? the Holy Spirit, being now become their professed enemy, he spoils them of it all. *From him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.* Seeing he neither had used his gifts or talent unto any saving end, being now at an open enmity with him who lent it him, it shall be taken away. (2d.) He will come upon him with spiritual judgments, smiting them with blindness of mind and obstinacy of will, filling them with folly, giddiness, and madness in their ways of sin, which sometimes shall produce most doleful effects in themselves and others. (3d.) He will cast them out of his territories. If they have been members of churches, he will order that they shall be cut off, and cast out of them. (4th.) He frequently gives them in this world a foretaste of that everlasting vengeance which is prepared for them. Such are those sorrows of conscience and other terrible effects of an utter desperation, which he justly, righteously, and holily sends upon the minds and souls of some of them; and these things will he do, as to demonstrate the greatness and holiness of his nature; so also that all may know what it is to despise his goodness, kindness, and love. And the consideration of these things belongs unto us. It is our wisdom and duty to consider as well the ways and degrees of the Spirit's departure from provoking sinners, as

those of his approach unto us with love and grace. These latter have been much considered by many, as to all his great works towards us, and that unto the great advantage and edification of those concerned in them. For thence have they learned both their own state and condition, as also what particular duties they were on all occasions to apply themselves unto, as in part we have manifested before, in our discourses about regeneration and sanctification.

And it is of no less concernment unto us, to consider aright the ways and degrees of his departure, which are expressed to give us that Godly fear and reverence wherewith we ought to consider and observe him. David, in his sin, feared nothing more than that God would take his Holy Spirit from him, Psal. li. 11. And the fear here spoken of should influence us into the utmost care and diligence against sin; for, although he should not utterly forsake us, which, as to those who are true believers, is contrary to the tenor, promise, and grace of the new covenant, yet he may so withdraw his presence from us, as that we may spend the remainder of our days in trouble, and our years in darkness and sorrow. Let him, therefore, that thinketh he standeth, on this account also, take heed lest he fall; and as for them with whom he is, as it were, but on the entrance of his work, producing such effect on their minds, as being followed and attended to, might have a saving event, he may, upon their provocations, utterly forsake them, in the way and by the degrees above mentioned. It is therefore the duty of all to serve him with fear and trembling on this account. And, secondly, it is so, to take heed of the very entrances of the course described. Have there been such evils in any of us, as wherein it is evident that the Spirit is grieved? As we love our souls, we are to take care that we do not vex him by a continuance in them. And if we do not diligently and speedily recover ourselves from the first, the second

will ensue. Hath he been grieved by our negligence in, or of duties, by our indulgence in any lust, by compliance with, or conformity to the world? let not our continuance in so doing make it his vexation. Remember, that while he is but grieved, he continues to supply us with all due means for our healing and recovery. He will do so also when he is yet vexed; but he will do it with such a mixture of anger and displeasure, as shall make us know that what we have done is an evil thing and a bitter. But have any proceeded farther, and continued long thus to vex him, and have refused his instructions, when accompanied, it may be, with sore afflictions, or inward distresses, that have been evident tokens of his displeasure? Let such souls rouse up themselves to lay hold on him; for he is ready to depart, it may be for ever. And, thirdly, we may do well to consider much the miserable condition of those who are utterly forsaken by him. When we see a man who hath lived in a plentiful and flourishing condition, brought to extreme penury and want, seeking his bread in rags from door to door, the spectacle is bad, although we know he brought this misery upon himself by profuseness or debauchery of life. But how sad it is to think of a man, whom, it may be, we know to have had a great light and conviction, to have made an amiable profession, to have been adorned with sundry useful spiritual gifts, and had in estimation on this account, now to be despoiled of all his ornaments, to have lost light, and life, and gifts, and profession, and to lie as a poor withered branch on the dunghill of the world. And the sadness hereof will be increased, when we shall consider, not only that the Spirit of God is departed from him, but also is become his enemy, and fights against him, whereby he is devoted unto irrecoverable ruin.

IV. EXTRAORDINARY SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

1. Extraordinary spiritual gifts were of two sorts. First, such as absolutely exceed the whole powers and faculties

of our own minds and souls. These, therefore, did not consist in an abiding principle or faculty always resident in them that received them, so as that they could exercise them by virtue of any inherent power and ability. They were so granted unto some persons in the execution of their office, as that, so often as was needful, they could produce their effects by virtue of an immediate extraordinary influence of divine power transiently affecting their minds. Such was the gift of miracles, healing and the like. There were no extraordinary officers, but they had these gifts. But yet they could work or operate by virtue of them, only as the Holy Ghost gave them especial direction for the putting forth of his power in them. So it is said that Paul and Barnabas, preaching at Iconium, "the Lord gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands." Acts xiv. 3. The working of signs and miracles is the immediate operation of the Spirit of God; nor can any power or faculty, efficiently productive of such effects, abide in the souls or minds of men; these miraculous operations were the witness of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which he gave to the truth of the gospel. See Heb. ii. 4. Wherefore there was no more in these gifts, which absolutely exceed the whole faculties of our natures, but the designing of certain persons by the Holy Ghost, in and with whose ministry he would himself effect miraculous operations.

Secondly, they were such as consisted in extraordinary endowments and improvements of the faculties of the souls or minds of men; such as wisdom, knowledge, utterance, and the like. Now, where these were bestowed on any in an extraordinary manner, as they were on the apostles and evangelists, they differed only in degree from them that are ordinary and still continued, but are of the same kind with them; whereof we shall treat afterward. Now, whereas all these gifts, of both sorts, are expressly and

distinctly enumerated and set down by our Apostle in one place, I shall consider them as they are there proposed by him.

2. 1 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal; for to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every one severally as he will." I shall now only consider the especial spiritual gifts that are here enumerated by the Apostle, which are nine in number, laid down promiscuously without respect unto any order or dependance of one upon another; although it is probable that those first placed, were the principal, or of principal use in the church.

3. The first is λόγος σοφίας, the word of wisdom; λόγος here is the same signification with דבר in the Hebrew, which often signifies a thing or matter. Wherefore the word of wisdom is nothing but wisdom itself; and our enquiry is, what was that wisdom which was a peculiar and an especial gift (in those days) of the Holy Ghost? Our Lord Jesus Christ promised unto his disciples, that he would give them a "mouth and wisdom, which all other adversaries should not be able to gainsay nor resist." Luke xxi. 15. This will be our rule in the declaration of the nature of this gift. That which he hath respect unto, is the defence of the gospel and its truth, against powerful persecuting adversaries; for, although they had the truth on their side, yet being men ignorant and unlearned, they might justly fear that when they were brought before kings and rulers, and priests, they should be baffled in their profession, and not be able to defend the truth; wherefore

this promise of a mouth and wisdom respects spiritual ability and utterance in the defence of the truth of the gospel, when they were called into question about it. Spiritual ability of mind is the wisdom, and utterance and freedom of speech is the mouth here promised. An eminent instance of the accomplishment hereof we have in Peter and John, Acts iv.; for upon their making a defence of the resurrection of Christ, and the truth of the gospel therein, such as their adversaries were not able to gainsay nor resist, it is said, that when the rulers and elders saw their παῤῥησιαν, that is, their utterance in defence of their cause with boldness, and saw the wisdom wherewith it was accompanied, considering that, they were astonished, and only considered "that they had been with Jesus," ver. 13. And he it was, who, in the accomplishment of his promise, had given them spiritual wisdom and utterance, which they were not able to resist. So it is said expressly of Stephen, that his adversaries were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit whereby he spake. Acts vi. 10.; wherefore this gift of wisdom, in the first place, was a spiritual skill and ability to defend the truths of the gospel when questioned, opposed, or blasphemed. And this gift was eminent in those primitive times, when a company of unlearned men were able, upon all occasions, to maintain and defend the truth which they believed and professed, before and against doctors, scribes, lawyers, rulers of synagogues, yea princes, and kings, continually so confounding their adversaries, as that, being obstinate in their unbelief, they were forced to cover their shame, by betaking themselves unto rage and bestial fury, (Acts vi. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14; chap. vii. 54; chap. xxii. 22, 23,) as hath been the manner of all their successors ever since.

4. Now, although this be an especial kind of wisdom, an eminent gift of the Holy Ghost, wherein the glory of Christ, and honor of the gospel is greatly concerned, namely, an ability to manage and defend the truth in times of trial and

danger, to the confusion of its adversaries; yet I suppose the wisdom here intended, is not absolutely confined thereunto, though it be principally intended. Peter, speaking of Paul's epistles, that they were written "according to the wisdom given unto him, (2. Peter, iii. 15,) that is, that especial gift of spiritual wisdom, for the management of gospel truths unto the edification of the church of Christ, which he had received. And he that would understand what this wisdom is, must be thorougly conversant in the writings of that Apostle; for indeed the wisdom that he useth in the management of the doctrine of the gospel, in the due consideration of all persons, occasions, circumstances, temptations of men and churches, of their state, condition, strength, or weakness, growth or decays, obedience or failings, their capacities and progresses, with the holy accommodation of himself in what he teacheth or delivereth; in meekness, in vehemency, in tenderness, in sharpness, in severe arguings, and pathetical expostulations, with all other ways and means suited unto his holy ends, in the propagation of the gospel, and edification of the church, are inexpressibly glorious and excellent. All this did he do according to the singular gift of wisdom that was bestowed on him; wherefore I take the word of wisdom here mentioned, to be a peculiar spiritual skill and ability, wisely to manage the gospel in its administration unto the advantage and furtherance of the truth, especially in the defence of it when called unto the trial with its adversaries. This was an eminent gift of the Holy Ghost, which, considering the persons employed by him in the ministry, for the most part being known to be unlearned and ignorant, filled the world with amazement, and was an effectual means for the subduing of multitudes unto the obedience of the faith. And so eminent was the apostle Paul in this gift, and so successful in the management of it, that his adversaries had nothing to say, but that he was "subtle, and took men by craft and guile." 2 Cor. xii. 16. The sweetness, conde-

scension, self-denial, holy compliance, with all which he made use of, mixed with truth, gravity, and authority, they would have had to be all craft and guile; and this gift when it is in any measure continued unto any minister of the gospel, is of singular use unto the church of God; yea, I doubt not but the Apostle fixed it here, in the first place, as that which was eminent above all the rest. And as where it is too much wanting, we see what woful mistakes and miscarriages, men, otherwise good and holy, will run themselves into, unto the great disadvantage of the gospel; so the real enjoyment and exercise of it in any competent measure, is the life and grace of the ministry. As God filled Bezaliel and Aholiab with wisdom for the building of the tabernacle of old, so unless he give this spiritual wisdom unto the ministers of the gospel, no tabernacle of his will be erected where it is fallen down, nor kept up where it stands. I intend not secular wisdom, or civil wisdom, much less carnal wisdom, but a spiritual ability to discharge all our duties aright in the ministry committed unto us. And, as was said, where this is wanting, we shall quickly see woful and shameful work made in churches themselves.

I cannot pass by the consideration of this gift, without offering something that may guide us, either in the obtaining, or the due exercise of it. And hereunto the things ensuing may be subservient; as (1.) a sense of our own insufficiency as of ourselves, as unto any end for which this wisdom is requisite; as it is declared that we have no sufficiency in ourselves for any thing that is good, all our sufficiency being of God; so, in particular, it is denied that we have any for the work of the ministry, in that interrogation containing a negative proposition, "and who is sufficient for these things?" 2 Cor. ii. 16. A sense hereof is the first step towards this wisdom, as our Apostle expressly declares, "Let no man deceive himself; if any among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him be-

come a fool, that he may be wise." 1 Cor. iii. 18. Until we discover, and are sensible of our own folly, we are fit neither to receive nor use this spiritual wisdom; and the want hereof proves the ruin of many that pretend unto the ministry; and it were to be wished, that it were only their own; they come to the work of it full of pride, self-conceit, and foolish elation of mind, in an apprehension of their own abilities, which yet, for the most part, are mean and contemptible; this keeps them sufficiently estranged from a sense of that spiritual wisdom we treat of. Hence there is nothing of a gospel ministry, nor its work, found among them but an empty name; and as for those who have reduced all ecclesiastical administrations to canons, laws, acts, courts, and legal processes in them, they seem to do it with a design to cast off all use of spiritual gifts, yea, to exclude both them and their author, name and thing, out of the church of God. Is this the wisdom given by the Holy Ghost, for the due management of gospel-administrations, namely, that men should get a little skill in some of the worst of human laws, and uncomely artifices of intriguing secular courts, which they pride themselves in, and terrify poor creatures with mulcts and penalties, that are any way obnoxious unto them? What use these things may be of in the world I know not, unto the church of God they do not belong.

Being sensible of our own insufficiency, earnest prayers for a supply of this wisdom are required in us. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." James i. 5. There is both a precept and a promise to enforce this duty. That we all want wisdom in ourselves is unquestionable; I mean as to our concerns in the gospel, either to bear testimony unto it in difficulties, or to manage the truths of it unto edification; the way for our supply lies plain and open before us, neither is there any other that we can take one step in towards it. "Let

us ask it of God, who giveth liberally," and we shall receive it. This was that which rendered Solomon so great and glorious; when he had his choice given him of all desirable things, he made his request for wisdom to the discharge of the office and the duties of it that God had called him unto. Though it were a whole kingdom that he was to rule, yet was his work carnal, and of this world, compared with the spiritual administrations of the gospel; and hereunto a worldly ministry is no less averse than unto a sense of their own insufficiency. The fruits do sufficiently manifest how much this duty is contemned by them, but the neglect of it, I say, the neglect of praying for wisdom to be enabled unto the discharge of the work of the ministry, and the due management of the truths of the gospel, according as occasion do require in them who pretend thereunto, is a fruit of unbelief, yea, of atheism and contempt of God.

Due meditation on our great pattern, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Apostles, being followers of them, as they were of him, is also required hereunto; as in all other things, so in especial, in his ministry, for the revelation of the truth, and giving testimony thereunto, the Lord Jesus was the great pattern and example; God in him representing unto us that perfection in wisdom which we ought to aim at. I shall not here, in particular, look into this heavenly treasury, but only say, that he who would be really and truly wise in spiritual things, who would either rightly receive, or duly improve this gift of the Holy Ghost, he ought continually to bear in his heart, his mind, and affections, this great exemplar and idea of it, even the Lord Jesus Christ, in his ministry, namely, what he did, what he spake, how, on all occasions, his condescension, meekness, and authority did manifest themselves, until he be changed into the same image and likeness by the Spirit of the Lord. The same is to be done in their place and sphere towards the Apostles, as the principal followers of

Christ, and who do most lively represent his graces and wisdom unto us. Their writings, and what written is of them, are to be searched and studied unto this very end, that considering how they behaved themselves, in all instances, on all occasions, in their testimony, and all administrations of the truth, we may endeavour after a conformity unto them in the participation of the same Spirit with them. It would be no small stay and guidance unto us, if, on all occasions, we would diligently search and consider what the Apostles did in such circumstances, or what they would have done in answer to what is recorded of their spirit and actings; for, although this wisdom be a gift of the Holy Spirit, yet as we now consider it, as it is continued in the church, it may be in part obtained, and greatly improved, in the due use of the means which are subservient thereunto, provided that in all we depend solely on God for the giving of it, who hath also prescribed these means unto us for the same end.

Let them who design a participation of this gift, take heed that it be not stifled with such vicious habits of mind as are expressly contrary unto it, and destructive of it; such are self-fulness, or confidence, hastiness of spirit, promptness to speak, and slowness to hear, which are the great means which make many abound in their own sense and folly, to be wise in their own conceits, and contemptible in the judgment of all that are truly so. Ability of speech, in time and season, is an especial gift of God, and that eminently with respect unto the spiritual things of the gospel; but a profluency of speech, venting itself on all occasions, and on no occasions, making men open their mouths wide, when, indeed, they should shut them; and open their ears, and to pour out all that they know, and what they do not know, making them angry if they are not heard, and impatient if they are contradicted, is an unconquerable fortification against all true spiritual wisdom.

Let those who would be sharers herein, follow after those

gifts and graces which do accompany it, promote it, and are inseparable from it; such are humility, meekness, patience, constancy, with boldness and confidence in profession, without which we shall be fools in every trial. Wisdom, indeed, is none of all these, but it is that which cannot be without them, nor will it thrive in any mind that is not cultivated by them; and he who thinks it is not worth his pains and travail, nor that it will quit cost to seek after this spiritual wisdom, by a constant watchfulness against the opposite vices mentioned, and attendance unto those concomitant duties and graces, must be content to go without it. This is the first instance given by our Apostle of the spiritual gifts of the primitive times; to one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit. Λόγος γνώσεως I showed before, λόγος may denote the thing itself, the word of knowledge; but if any shall suppose that because this knowledge was to be expressed unto the church for its edification, it is therefore called a word of knowledge, as a word of exhortation, or a word of consolation; that is, exhortation and consolation administered by words, I shall not contend to the contrary. It is knowledge that is the gift peculiarly intended in this second place; and we must inquire, both how it is an especial gift, and of what sort it is; and it should seem that it cannot have the nature of an especial gift, seeing it is that which was common to all; for so saith the Apostle, speaking unto the whole church of the Corinthians, "We know that we all have knowledge." 1 Cor. viii. 1. And not only so, but he also adds, that this knowledge is a thing, which either in its own nature tends unto an ill issue, or is very apt to be abused thereunto; for, saith he, "knowledge puffeth up," for which cause he frequently reflects upon it in other places; but yet we shall find that it is a peculiar gift, and in itself singularly useful; however, it may be abused, as the best things may be, yea are the most liable thereunto. The

knowledge mentioned in that place by the Apostle, which he ascribes in common unto all the church, was only that which concerned things sacrificed unto idols; and if we should extend it farther, unto an understanding of the mystery of the gospel which was in the community of believers, yet is there place remaining for an eminence therein, by virtue of an especial spiritual gift; and as to what he adds about knowledge puffing up, he expounds in the next words; if any man "thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know," ver. 2. It is not men's knowledge, but the vain and proud conceit of ignorant men, supposing themselves knowing and wise, that so puffeth up, and hindereth edification.

Wherefore, (1.) by this word of knowledge, not that degree of it which is required in all Christians, in all the members of the church is intended; such a measure of knowledge there, is necessary, both unto faith and confession. Men can believe nothing of that whereof they know nothing, nor can they confess with their mouths, what they apprehend not in their minds; but it is somewhat singular, eminent, and not common to all; neither (2.) doth that eminency or singularity consist in this, that it is saving and sanctifying knowledge which is intended; for it is reckoned among gifts, whereas that other is a saving grace, whose difference hath been declared before. It is expressed by the Apostle, 1 Cor. xiii. 2, by "understanding all mysteries and all knowledge;" that is, having an understanding in, and the knowledge of all mysteries. This knowledge he calleth a gift, which shall vanish away, (ver. 8,) and so not belonging absolutely unto that grace, which being a part of the image of God in us, shall go over into eternity; and knowledge, in ver. 2, is taken from the thing known, if "I understand all knowledge," which is the same with all mysteries; wherefore the knowledge here intended, is such a peculiar and especial insight into the mysteries of the gospel, as whereby those in whom it

was, were enabled to teach and instruct others. Thus the apostle Paul, who had received all these gifts in the highest degree and measure, affirms, that, by his writing, those to whom he wrote might perceive his "skill and understanding in the mystery of Christ."

And this was in an especial manner necessary unto those first dispensers of the gospel; for how else should the church have been instructed in the knowledge of it? This they prayed for them, namely, that they might be filled with the "knowledge of the will of God, in all wisdom and understanding." (Col. i. 9, Eph. i. 18, 19, 20, chap. iii. 18, 19, Col. ii. 2.) The means whereby they might come hereunto, was by their instruction, who, therefore, were to be skilled in a peculiar manner in the knowledge of those mysteries, which they were to impart unto others, and to do it accordingly: and so it was with them (Acts, xx. 27, Eph. iii. 8, 9, Col. iv. 2.) Now, although this gift, as to that excellent degree wherein it was in the apostles, and those who received the knowledge of Christ and the gospel by immediate revelation, be withheld, yet it is still communicated in such a measure unto the ministers of the church, as is necessary unto its edification. And for any one to undertake an office in the church, who has not received this gift in some good measure, of the knowledge of the mystery of God, and the gospel, is to impose himself on that service in the house of God, which he is neither called unto, nor fitted for. And whereas we have lived to see all endeavours after an especial acquaintance with the mysteries of the gospel despised or derided by some, it is an evidence of that fatal and fearful apostacy, wherein the generality of Christians are fallen.

Faith is added, in the third place, "To another faith, by the same Spirit." That the saving grace of faith, which is common unto all true believers, is not here intended, is manifest from the context. There is a faith in scripture, which is commonly called the faith of miracles, mentioned

by our apostle, in this epistle, as a principal, extraordinary, spiritual gift, (chap. xiii. 2) "Though I had all faith, so that I could remove mountains," that is, the highest degree of faith of miracles, or such as would effect miraculous operations of the highest nature. This I should readily admit to be here intended, but that there is mention made of working miracles in the next verse, as a gift distinct from this faith: yet, whereas this working of miracles is every where ascribed to faith, and could not be any where, but where the peculiar faith from which those operations did proceed was first imparted; it is not unlikely, but that by faith, the principle of all miraculous operations may be intended, and by the other expressions the operations themselves. But if the distinction of these gifts be to be preserved, as I rather judge that it ought to be, considering the placing of faith immediately upon wisdom and knowledge, I should judge that a peculiar confidence, boldness, and assurance of mind, in the profession of the gospel, and the administration of its ordinances, is here intended. Faith, therefore, is παῤῥησια ἐν πίστει, that freedom, confidence, and boldness in the faith, or profession of the faith, which is in Christ Jesus, mentioned by the apostle, (1 Tim. iii. 13) That is, our ὑπόστασις, or confidence in profession, whose beginning we are to hold fast and firm unto the end. (Heb. iii. 14.) And we do see how excellent a gift this is on all occasions. When troubles and trials do befal the church, upon the account of its professions, many, even true believers, are very ready to faint and despond, and some to draw back, at least for a season; as others do utterly, to the perdition of their souls. In this state, the eminent usefulness of this gift of boldness in the faith, of an assured confidence in profession, of an especial faith to go through troubles and trials, is known unto all. Ofttimes the eminence of it in one single person hath been the means to preserve a whole church from coldness, backsliding, or sinful compliances

with the world. And where God stirreth up any one unto some great or singular work in his church, he constantly endows them with this gift of faith. So was it with Luther, whose undaunted courage and resolution in profession, or boldness in the faith, was one of the principal means of succeeding in his great undertaking. And there is no more certain sign of churches being forsaken of Christ, in a time of trial, than if this gift be withheld from them, and pusillanimity, fearfulness, with carnal wisdom, do spring up in the room of it. The work and effects of this faith are expressed, 1 Cor. xvi. 13, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." So also, Eph. vi. 10, 2 Peter, ii. 1, and the especial way whereby it may be attained or improved, is by a diligent careful discharge at all times of all the duties of the places we hold in the church. 1 Peter, iii. 13.

The gifts of healing are next mentioned, *χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων*, "To another, the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit." So they are again expressed, (ver. 28) in the plural number, because of their free communication unto many persons. These healings respected those that were sick, in their sudden and miraculous recovery from long or deadly distempers, by the imposition of hands in the name of the Lord Jesus. And as many of the mighty works of Christ himself, for the reasons that shall be mentioned, consisted in these healings, so it was one of the first things which he gave in commission to his apostles, and furnished them with power for, whilst they attended on him in his personal ministry. (Matt. x. 1.) So also did he do unto the seventy, making it the principal sign of the approach of the kingdom of God. (Luke, x. 9.) And the same power and virtue he promiseth to believers, namely, that they should, "lay hands on the sick, and recover them," after his ascension. Of the accomplishment of this promise, and the exercise of this power, the story of the Acts of the Apostles giveth us many instances.

(Acts, v. 15, iii. 7, ix. 33, 34.) And two things are observed singular in the exercise of this gift. As, first, that many were cured by the shadow of Peter, as he passed by (Acts, v. 15); and again, many were so by handkerchiefs and aprons, carried from the body of Paul (chap. xix. 12). And the reason of these extraordinary operations in extraordinary cases, seems to have been the encouragement of that great faith which was then stirred up in them that beheld those miraculous operations, which was of singular advantage unto the propagation of the gospel; as the magical superstition of the Roman church, sundry ways, endeavouring to imitate these inimitable actings of sovereign divine power, hath been a dishonor to Christian religion.

But, whereas these healings were miraculous operations, it may be inquired why the gift of them is constantly distinguished from miracles, and is placed as a distinct effect of the Holy Ghost by itself; for that so it is, is evident both in the commission of Christ granting this power unto his disciples, and in the enumeration of these gifts in this and other places. I answer, this seems to be done on a threefold account: 1. Because miracles, absolutely were a sign to them that believed not, as the apostle speaketh of tongues; they "were a sign not unto them that believe, but unto them that believe not," (1 Cor. xiv. 22) that is, which served for their conviction. But this work of healing was a sign unto believers themselves, and that on a double account: for, first, the pouring out of this gift of the Holy Ghost, was a peculiar sign and token of the coming of the kingdom of God. So saith our Saviour to his disciples, "Heal the sick, and say unto them, the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you;" (Luke, x. 9.) this gift of healing being a token and pledge thereof. This sign did our Saviour give of it himself, when John sent his disciples unto him to enquire, for their own satisfaction, not his, whether he were the Messiah or not.

(Matt. xi. 4, 5.) "Go," saith he, "and show John these things which ye do see and hear, the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them;" which was the evidence of his own being the Messiah, and bringing in the kingdom of God. The Jews have an ancient tradition, that in the days of the Messiah all things should be healed but the serpent. And there is a truth in what they say; although, for their parts, they understand it not. For all are healed by Christ but the serpent and his seed, the wicked unbelieving world. And hereof, namely, of the healing and recovery of all things by Christ, was this gift or sign unto the church. Wherefore, he began his ministry after his first miracle, with "healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases," among the people. (Matt. iv. 23, 24, 25.)

2. It was a sign that Christ had borne and taken away sin, which was the cause, root, and spring of diseases and sicknesses, without which, no one could have been miraculously cured. Hence that place of Isaiah, chap. liii. 4, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:" which is afterwards interpreted, "by being wounded for our trangressions, and being bruised for our iniquities." (ver. 5.) As also by Peter, by his "bearing our sins in his own body, on the tree," (1 Pet. ii. 24) is applied by Matthew unto the curing of diseases and sicknesses. (Matt. viii. 16, 17.) Now, this was for no other reason but because this healing of diseases was a sign and effect of his bearing our sins, the causes of them, with a supposition whereof healing would have been a false witness unto men. It was, therefore, on these accounts, a sign unto believers also.

Because it had a peculiar goodness, relief, and benignity towards mankind in it, which other miraculous operations had not; at least, not unto the same degree. Indeed, this was one great difference between the miracu-

lous operations that were wrought under the Old Testament, and those under the New; that the former generally consisted in dreadful and tremendous works, bringing astonishment, and ofttimes ruin to mankind; but those other were generally useful and beneficial to all. But this of healing had a peculiar evidence of love, kindness, compassion, benignity, and was suited greatly to affect the minds of men with regard and gratitude. For long afflictive distempers, or violent pains, such as were the diseases cured by this gift, do prepare the minds of men, and those concerned in them, greatly to value their deliverance. This, therefore, in an especial manner, declared and evidenced the goodness, love, and compassion of him that was the author of this gospel, and gave this sign of healing spiritual diseases, by healing bodily distempers. And, doubtless, many who were made partakers of the benefit hereof, were greatly affected with it; and that not only by walking, and leaping, and praising God, as the cripple did who was cured by Peter and John, (Acts, iii. 8) but also unto faith and boldness in profession, as it was with the blind man healed by our Saviour himself, (John, viii. 31, 32, 33, 38, &c.) But yet no outward effects of themselves can work upon the hearts of men, so as that all who are made partakers of them should be brought unto faith, thankfulness, and obedience. Hence, did not only our Saviour himself observe, that of ten at once cleansed by him of their leprosy, but one returned to give glory to God (Luke, xvii. 7;) but he whom he cured of a disease that he had suffered under eight and thirty years, notwithstanding a following admonition given him by our blessed Saviour, turned informer against him, and endeavoured to betray him to the Jews (John, v. 5, 8, 13, 14, 15). It is effectual grace alone which can change the heart, without which it will continue obstinate and unbelieving, under not only the sight and consideration of the most miraculous outward operations, but also the partici-

pation in ourselves of the benefit and fruits of them. Men may have their bodies cured by miracles, when their souls are not cured by grace.

It is thus placed distinctly by itself, and not placed under the common head of miracles, because ordinarily there were some outward means and tokens of it that were to be made use of, in the exercise of this gift. Such were (1.) Imposition of hands. Our Saviour himself, in healing of the sick, did generally lay his hands on them (Matt. vi. 5, Luke, iv. 40). And he gave the same order unto his disciples, "that they should lay their hands on those that were sick, and heal them," which was practised by them accordingly. (2.) Anointing with oil. "They anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them," (Mark, vi. 13), and the elders of the church, with whom this gift was continued, were to come to him that was sick, and praying over him, anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord, and he should be saved. (James, v. 14, 15.) Some contend for the circumstance of this ceremony, or the anointing of them that are sick by the elders of the church, but without ground or warrant; for, although it be their duty to pray in a particular manner for those that are sick, of their flocks, and it be the duty of them who are sick, to call for them unto that purpose; yet the application of the outward ceremony being instituted, not as a means of an uncertain cure, as all are which work naturally unto that end, but as a pledge and token of a certain healing and recovery, where there is not an infallible faith thereof, when the healing may not ensue; it is to turn an ordinance into a lie: for, if a recovery follow ten times on this anointing, if it once fall out otherwise, the institution is rendered a lie, a false testimony; and the other recoveries manifested to have had no dependence on the observing of it. For these reasons, I judge, that this gift of healing, though belonging unto miraculous operations in general, is every where reckoned as a distinct gift by itself. And

from that place of James, I am apt to think that this gift was communicated in an especial manner unto the elders of churches, even that were ordinary and fixed; it being of so great use, and such singular comfort to them that were poor and persecuted, which was the condition of many churches, and their members, in those days.

Miracles ensue, in the fifth place, ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων, "effectual working of mighty powers, or powerful works." For the signification of this word here rendered miracles, the reader may consult Dr. Owen's Exposition on Heb. ii. 4. I shall not thence transcribe what is already declared, nor is any thing necessary to be added thereunto. Concerning this gift of miracles we have also spoken before in general; so that we shall not much further insist upon it; neither is it necessary that we should here treat of the nature, end, and use of miracles in general, which, in part, also hath been done before. Wherefore, I shall only observe some few things as to the gift itself, and the use of it in the church, which alone are our present concernment. And, (1) As we before observed, this gift did not consist in any inherent power or faculty of the mind; so as that those who had received it should have an ability of their own to work or effect such miracles, when and as they saw good. As this is disclaimed by the apostles. (Acts, iii. 12) so a supposition of it would overthrow the very nature of miracles; for a miracle is an immediate effect of divine power exceeding all created abilities; and what is not so, though it may be strange or wonderful, is no miracle. Only Jesus Christ had in his own person a power of working miracles when, and where, and how he pleased, because God was with him, or "the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily." (2.) Unto the working of every miracle in particular, there was a peculiar act of faith required in them that wrought it. This is that faith which is called the faith of miracles, "Have all faith so that I could remove mountains." (1 Cor. xiii. 2) Now, this faith

was not a strong fixing of the imagination that such a thing should be done, as some have blasphemously dreamed; nor was it a faith resting merely on the promises of the word, making particular application of them unto times, seasons, and occasions wherein it no way differs from the ordinary grace of faith: but this was the true nature of it, that as it was in general resolved into promises of the word, and power of Christ declared therein, that such and such things should be wrought in general; so it had always a peculiar immediate revelation for its warranty and security in the working of any miracle. And without such an immediate revelation, or divine impulse and impression, all attempts of miraculous operations are vain, and means only for satan to insinuate his delusions by. No man could, therefore, work any miracle, nor attempt in faith, so to do, without an immediate revelation that divine power should be therein exerted, and put forth in its operation: yet I do not suppose that it was necessary that this inspiration and revelation should, in order of time, precede the acting of this faith, though it did the operation of the miracle itself. Yea, the inspiration itself consisted in the elevation of faith to apprehend divine power in such a case for such an end, which the Holy Ghost granted not to any, but when he designed so to work. Thus Paul, at once, acted faith, apprehended divine power, and at the same time struck Elymas the sorcerer blind by a miraculous operation. (Acts, xiii. 9, 10, 11, 12.) "Being filled with the Holy Ghost," (ver. 9) that is, having received an impression and warranty from him, he put forth that act of faith, at whose presence the Holy Spirit would effect that miraculous operation which he believed. Wherefore this was the nature of the gift; some persons were by the Holy Ghost endowed with that especial faith which was prepared to receive impressions and intimations of his putting forth his power in this or that miraculous operation. Those who had this faith could not work miracles

when, and where, and how they pleased; only they could infallibly signify what the Holy Ghost would do, and so were the outward instruments of the execution of his power.

Although the apostles had all gifts of the Spirit in an eminent degree and manner above all others, as Paul saith, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all;" yet it appears that there were some other persons distinct from them, who had this gift of working miracles in a peculiar manner. For it is not only here reckoned as a peculiar distinct gift of the Holy Ghost, but also the persons who had received it are reckoned as distinct from the apostles and other officers of the church. (1 Cor. xii. 28, 29.) Not that I think this gift constituted them officers in the church, enabling them to exercise power in gospel administrations therein; only they were brethren of the church, made eminent by a participation of this gift, for the end whereunto it was ordained. By these persons' ministry did the Holy Spirit, on such occasions as seemed meet to his infinite wisdom, effect miraculous operations, besides what was done in the same kind by the apostles and evangelists all the world over.

The use of this gift in the church at that time and season was manifested; for the principles which believers proceeded on, and the doctrines they professed, were new and strange to the world, and such as had mighty prejudices raised against them in the minds of men. The persons by whom they were maintained and asserted, were generally, as to their outward condition, poor and contemptible in the world. The churches themselves, as to their members, few in number; encompassed with multitudes of scoffers and persecuting idolators; themselves also newly converted, and many of them but weak in the faith. In this state of things, this gift of miracles was exceeding useful and necessary unto the propagation of the gospel, the vindication of the truth, and the establishment

of them that did believe. For (1.) by miracles occasionally wrought, the people round about, who yet believed not, were called in, as it were, unto a due consideration of what was done, and what was designed thereby. Thus when the noise was first spread abroad of the "apostles speaking with tongues, the multitude came together, and were confounded." Acts ii. 6. So the multitude gathered together at Lystra, upon the curing of the cripple by Paul and Barnabas, thinking them to have been gods. Acts xiv. 11. When, therefore, any were so amazed with seeing the miracles that were wrought, hearing that they were so in confirmation of the doctrine of the gospel, they could not but inquire with diligence into it, and cast out those prejudices which before they had entertained against it. (2.) They gave authority unto the ministers of the church. For, whereas on outward accounts they were despised by the great, wise, and learned men of the world, it was made evident, by these divine operations, that their ministry was of God, and what they taught approved by him. And where these two things were effected, namely, that a sufficient, yea, an eminently cogent ground and reason was given, why men should impartially enquire into the doctrine of the gospel, and an evidence given, that the teachers of it were approved of God, unless men were signally captivated under the power of Satan, (2 Cor. iv. 4) or given up of God judicially unto blindness and hardness of heart, it could not be but that the prejudices which they had of themselves, or might receive from others against the gospel, must of necessity be prevailed against and conquered. And as many of the Jews were so hardened and blinded at that time, (Rom. xi. 7—10; 1 Thess. ii. 14—16) so it is marvellous to consider with what artifices Satan bestirred himself among the Gentiles, by false and lying signs and wonders, with many other ways, to take off from the testimony given unto the gospel by these miraculous operations.

And this was what miracles were designed unto towards unbelievers, namely, to take away prejudices from the doctrine of the gospel, and the persons by whom it was taught, so disposing the minds of men unto an attendance unto it, and the reception of it; for they were never means instituted of God for the ingenerating of faith in any, but only to provoke and prevail with men to attend unprejudicately unto that whereby it was to be wrought. "For faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," Rom. x. 17. And therefore whatever miracles were wrought, if the word preached was not received, if that did not accompany them in its powerful operation, they were but despised. Thus, whereas some, upon hearing the "apostles speak with tongues," mocked and said, "These men are full of new wine," (Acts ii. 13.) yet upon preaching the word which ensued, they were converted unto God. And the apostle Paul tells us, that if there were nothing but miraculous speaking with tongues in the church, an unbeliever coming in would say they were all mad, (1 Cor. xiv. 23) who by the word of prophecy would be convinced, judged, and converted unto God. (Ver. 24, 25.) (3.) They were of singular use to confirm and establish in the faith those who were weak and newly converted. For, whereas they were assaulted on every hand by Satan, the world, and it may be their nearest relations, and that with contempt, scorn, and cruel mocking, it was a singular confirmation and establishment, to behold the miraculous operations which were wrought in the approbation of the doctrine which they did profess. Hereby was a sense of it more and more let into and impressed on their minds, until, by an habitual experience of its goodness, power, and efficacy, they were established in the truth.

Prophecy is added in the sixth place: ἀλλῳ δε προφητεια "To another prophecy," that is, is given by the same Spirit. Of this gift of prophecy we have sufficiently

treated before. I take it here in its largest sense; both as it signifies a faculty of prediction, or foretelling things future upon divine revelation, or an ability to declare the mind of God from the word, by the especial and immediate revelation of the Holy Ghost. The first of these was more rare, the latter more ordinary and common. And it may be, there were few churches wherein, besides their elders and teachers, by virtue of their office, there were not some of these prophets; so of those who had this gift of prophecy, enabling, in an eminent manner, to declare the mind of God from the Scriptures, unto the edification of the church. It is expressed that there were some of them in the church at Antioch, (Acts xiii. 1, 2) and many of them in the church at Corinth. (1 Cor. xiv.) For this gift was of singular use in the church; and therefore, as to the end of the edification thereof, is preferred by our apostle above all other gifts of the Spirit whatever, 1 Cor. xii. 31; xiv. 1, 39. For it had a double use: (1.) The conviction and conversion of such as came in occasionally into their church assemblies. Those unto whom the propagation of the gospel was principally committed, went up and down the world laying hold on all occasions to preach it unto the Jews and Gentiles, as yet unconverted. And where churches were gathered and settled, the principal work of their teachers was to edify them that did believe. But whereas some would come in among them into their church assemblies, perhaps out of curiosity, perhaps out of worse designs, the apostle declares that of all the ordinances of the church, this of prophecy was suited unto the conviction and conversion of all unbelievers, and is oft-times blessed thereunto, whereby "this and that man is born in Sion." (2) This exposition and application of the word by many, and that by virtue of an extraordinary assistance of the Spirit of God, was of singular use in the church itself. For if all Scripture given by inspiration from God, so expounded and applied, be

"profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," the more the church enjoys thereof, the more will its faith, love, obedience, and consolation be increased. Lastly, the manner of the exercise of this gift in the church unto edification, is prescribed and limited by our apostle, 1 Cor. xiv. 29—33. And first, he would not have the church burdened with the most profitable gift or its exercise, and therefore determines that, at one time, not above two or three be suffered to speak; that is, one after another, that the church be neither wearied nor burdened. (Verse 29.) Secondly, because it was possible that some of them who had this gift might mix somewhat of their own spirits in their word and ministry, and therein mistake and err from the truth, he requires that the other who had the like gift, and so were understanding in the mind of God, should judge of what was spoken by them, so as the church might not be led into any error by them; let the other judge. Thirdly, that order be observed in their exercise; and especially that way be given unto any immediate revelation, and no confusion be brought into the church by many speaking at the same time. And this direction manifests that the gift was extraordinary, and is now ceased; though there be a continuance of ordinary gifts of the same kind and to the same end in the church, as we shall see afterwards. (Ver. 30.) Fourthly, by the observation of this order, the apostle shows, that *all the prophets might exercise their gift* unto the instruction and consolation of the church in a proper season, such as their frequent assemblies would afford them. (Ver. 31.) And whereas it may be objected, that these things coming in an extraordinary immediate manner from the Holy Ghost, it was not in the power of them who received them to confine them to the order prescribed, which would seem to limit the Holy Spirit in his operations, whereas they were all to speak as the Spirit gave them ability and utterance; let what would ensue,

the apostle assures them by a general principle, that no such thing would follow on a due use and exercise of this gift, "For God," saith he, "is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." (Ver. 33.) As if he should have said, if such a course be taken, that any one should speak and prophesy as he pretended himself to be moved by the Spirit, and to have none to judge of what he said, all confusion, tumult, and disorder would ensue thereon; but God is the author of no such thing, gives no such gifts, appoints no such exercise of them as would tend thereunto. But how shall this be prevented, seeing these things are extraordinary, and not in our own power? Yea, saith he, *the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets.* (Ver. 32.) By the spirit of the prophets, that their spiritual gift and ability for its exercise is intended, none do question. And whereas the apostle had taught two things concerning the exercise of this gift: (1.) That it ought to be orderly, to avoid confusion; (2.) That what proceedeth from it ought to be judged by others; he manifests that both these may be observed, because *the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets*, that is, both their spiritual gift is so in their own power, as that they might dispose themselves unto its exercise with choice and judgment, so as to preserve order and peace, not being actuated as with an enthusiastical affection, and carried out of their own power; this gift in its exercise was subject unto their own judgment, choice, and understanding; so what they expressed by virtue of their spiritual gift was subject to be judged of by the other prophets that were in the church. Thus was the peace and order of the church to be preserved, and the edification of it to be promoted.

Discerning of spirits is the next gift of the Spirit here enumerated: ἄλλῳ δὲ διακρίσεις πνευμάτων, *To another the discerning of spirits;* the ability and faculty of judging of spirits; the dijudication of spirits. This gift I have upon another occasion formerly given an account of, and

therefore shall here but briefly touch upon it. All gospel administrations were in those days avowedly executed by virtue of spiritual gifts. No man then durst set his hand unto this work, but such as either really had, or highly pretended unto a participation of the Holy Ghost. For the administration of the gospel is the dispensation of the Spirit. This therefore was pleaded by all in the preaching of the word, whether in private assemblies, or publicly to the world. But it came also then to pass, as it did in all ages of the church, that where God gave unto any the extraordinary gifts of his Spirit, for the reformation or edification of the church, there Satan suborned some to make a pretence thereunto, unto its trouble and destruction; so was it under the Old Testament, and so was it foretold that it should be under the New. So the apostle Peter, having declared the nature and excellency, use and certainty of that prophecy which was of old, (2 Pet. i. 19—21) adds thereunto, "But there were false prophets also among the people," (ii. 1) that is, when God granted that signal privilege unto the church, of the immediate revelation of his will unto them by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which constituted men true prophets of the Lord, Satan stirred up others to pretend unto the same spirit of prophecy for his own malicious ends, whereby "there were false prophets also among the people." But it may be, it will be otherwise now under the gospel-church state. No, saith he, "there shall be false teachers among you," that is, persons pretending to the same spiritual gift that the apostles and evangelists had, yet bringing in thereby damnable heresies. Now, all their damnable opinions they fathered upon immediate revelations of the Spirit. This gave occasion to the holy apostle John to give that caution, with his reason for it, which is expressed 1 John iv. 1—3, which words we have opened before. And this false pretence unto extraordinary spiritual gifts, the church was tried and pestered withal so long as there was any occasion to give

it countenance, namely, whilst such gifts were really continued unto any therein. What way, then, had God ordained for the safety and preservation of the church, that it should not be imposed on by any of these delusions? I answer, there was a standing rule in the church, whereby whatsoever was, or could be offered doctrinally unto it, might certainly and infallibly be tried, judged, and determined on; and this was the rule of the written word, according to the rule of that everlasting ordinance, "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah viii. 20. This in all ages was sufficient for the preservation of the church from all errors and heresies, or damnable doctrines, which it never fell into, nor shall do so, but in the sinful neglect and contempt thereof. Moreover, the apostle further directs the application of this rule unto present occasions, by advising us to fix on fundamental principles, which are likely to be opposed, and if they are not owned and avowed, to avoid such teachers, whatever spiritual gift they pretend unto, 1 John iv. 2, 3; 2 John ix. 10, 11. But yet, because many in these days were weak in the faith, and might be surprised with such pretences, God had graciously provided and bestowed the gift here mentioned on some, it may be, in every church, namely, of discerning of spirits; they could, by virtue of the extraordinary gift and aid therein of the Holy Ghost, make a true judgment of the spirits that men pretended to act and to be actuated by, whether they were of God or not. And this was of singular use and benefit to the church in those days; for as spiritual gifts abounded, so did a pretence unto them, which was always accompanied with pernicious designs. Herein, therefore, did God grant relief for them who were either less skilful, or less wary, or less able on any account to make a right judgment between those who were really endowed with extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and those who falsely pretend thereunto.

For these persons received this gift, and were placed in the church for this very end, that they might guide and help them in making a right judgment in this matter. And whereas the communication of these gifts is ceased, and consequently all pretences unto them, unless by some persons phrenetical and enthusiastical, whose madness is manifest to all, there is no need of the continuance of this gift of discerning spirits, that standing infallible rule of the word, and ordinary assistance of the Spirit, being every way sufficient for our preservation in the truth; unless we give up ourselves to the conduct of corrupt lusts, pride, self-conceit, carnal interest, passions, and temptations, which ruin the souls of men.

The two spiritual gifts remaining are, *speaking with tongues, and their interpretation.* The first communication of this gift of tongues unto the apostles is particularly described Acts ii. 1—4, &c.; and although they were at that time endowed with all other gifts of the Holy Ghost, called *power from above*, (Acts i. 8) yet was this gift of tongues signalized by the visible pledge of it, the joint participation of the same gift by all, and the notoriety of the matter thereon, as in that place of the Acts is at large described. And God seems to have laid the foundation of preaching the gospel in this gift, for two reasons: (1.) To signify that the grace and mercy of the covenant was now no longer to be *confined unto one nation, language, or people*, but to be extended unto all nations, tongues, and languages of people under heaven. (2.) To testify by what means he would subdue the souls and consciences of men unto the obedience of Christ and the gospel, and by what means he would maintain his kingdom in the world. Now this was not by force and might, by external power, or armies, but by the "preaching of the word," whereof the tongue is the only instrument. And the outward sign of this gift, in "tongues of fire," evidenced the light and efficacy wherewith the Holy Ghost designed to accompany

the dispensation of the gospel. Wherefore, although this gift began with the apostles, yet was it afterwards very much diffused unto the generality of them that did believe. See Acts x. 46; xix. 6; 1 Cor. xiv. And some few things we may observe concerning this gift, as: (1.) The especial matter that was expressed by this gift seems to have been the *praises of God*, for his wonderful works of grace by Christ. Although I doubt not but that the apostles were enabled, by virtue of this gift, to declare the gospel unto any people to whom they came in their own language, yet ordinarily they did not preach nor instruct the people by virtue of this gift, but only *spake forth the praises of God*, to the admiration and astonishment of them who were yet strangers to the faith. So when they first received the gift, they were heard speaking the wonderful works of God (Acts ii. 11); and the gentiles who first believed spake with tongues and magnified God. (Acts x. 46.) (2.) These tongues were so given for a sign unto them that believed not, (1 Cor. xiv. 22) that sometimes those that spake with tongues understood not the sense and meaning of the words delivered by themselves, nor were they understood by the church itself wherein they were uttered. 1 Cor. xiv. 6—10, &c. But this I suppose was only sometimes; and that it may be, mostly, when this gift was unnecessarily used; for I doubt not but the apostles understood full well the things delivered by themselves in divers tongues. And all who had this gift, though they might not apprehend the meaning of what themselves spake and uttered, yet were so absolutely in the exercise of it under the conduct of the Holy Spirit, that they neither did nor could speak any thing, by virtue thereof, but what was according to the mind of God, and tended unto his praise. 1 Cor. xiv. 2, 14, 17. (3.) Although this gift were excellent in itself, and singularly effectual in the propagation of the gospel unto unbelievers, yet in the assemblies of the church it was of little or no

use, but only with respect unto the things themselves that were uttered. For as to the principal end of it, to be a sign unto believers, it was finished and accomplished towards them, so as they had no farther need nor use of it. But now, whereas many unbelievers came occasionally into the assemblies of the church, especially at some freer seasons, for whose conviction the Holy Ghost would for a season continue this gift among believers, that the church might not be disadvantaged thereby, he added the other gift here mentioned, namely, *the interpretation of tongues*. He endowed either those persons themselves who spake with tongues, or some others in the assembly, with an ability to interpret and declare to the church the things that were spoken and uttered in that miraculous manner; which is the last gift here mentioned. But the nature, use, and abuse of these gifts is so largely and distinctly spoken of by the apostle, (1 Cor. xiv) that, as I need not insist on them, so I cannot fully do it without an entire exposition of that whole chapter, which the nature of my design will not permit.

CHAPTER VI.

SEEKING REST FOR THE SOUL.—DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND GLORY.—THE END OF THE WORLD.—AND THE NATURE OF HEAVEN.

I. SEEKING REST FOR THE SOUL.

If there be so certain and glorious a rest for the saints, why is there not more industry used in seeking after it? One would think, if a man did but once hear of such unspeakable glory to be obtained, and believed what he heard to be true, he would be transported with the vehe-

mency of his desire, and almost forget to eat or drink. That he would care for nothing else, and speak of, and enquire after nothing else, but how to obtain this treasure. And yet people who hear of it daily, and profess to believe it, as a fundamental article of their faith, do as little mind it, or labour for it, as if they had never heard of such a thing, or did not believe one word of the matter. This reproof is more particularly applicable to the worldly-minded—the profane multitude—the formal professors, and even to the godly themselves.

The worldly-minded are so taken up with seeking for things below, that they have neither heart nor time to seek this rest. O foolish sinners, "who hath bewitched you?" The world bewitches men into brute beasts, and reduces them some degrees below madness. See what riding and running, what scrambling and catching for a thing of nought, while *eternal rest lies neglected.* What contriving and caring to get a step higher in the world than their brethren, while they neglect the kingly dignity of the saints. What insatiable pursuit of fleshly pleasures, while they look on the praises of God, and the joy of angels, as a tiresome burden. What unwearied diligence in raising their posterity, enlarging their possessions—perhaps even for a poor living from hand to mouth; while judgment is drawing near: but how it will then be with them, never puts them to one hour's consideration. What rising early and sitting up late, what labour from year to year, to *maintain* themselves and their children in credit *till they die;* but they never think on what follows after. Yet these men cry, "May we not be saved without so much to do?" How early do they rouse up their servants to their labour, but how seldom do they call them to prayer, or to read the Scriptures. But what, after all, hath this world done for its friends and admirers, that it is so eagerly followed and so painfully sought after, while Christ and heaven stand by, and few regard them? or

what will the world do for them in time to come? The common entrance into it is through anguish and sorrow; the passage through it is with continual labours, and the last scene in it is the sharpest of all.

O unreasonable, bewitched men, will mirth and pleasure stick close to you in the time of your utmost need? Will they hear your cry in the day of your calamity, at the hour of your death? Will they either answer you or relieve you? Will they go along with you to the other world, and purchase you a seat among the blessed?—Ah! no: there is not the least hope of it; for the rich man wanted a drop of water to cool his tongue, yet could not obtain it; and after his awful example, let us not imagine that the *sweet morsels* of present delight and honor are of more worth than eternal rest, or that they can recompense the loss of an enduring inheritance. Ah! vile, deceitful world! how often have we heard thy most faithful servants complaining at last, "Oh! the world hath deceived me, and undone me! It flattered me in my prosperity, but now it turns me off in my necessity. If I had as faithfully served Christ as I have served it, HE would not have left me comfortless and hopeless." Thus they complain; and yet succeeding sinners will take no warning.

As to the profane multitude, they will not be persuaded to be at so much pains for salvation, as even to perform the common, outward duties of religion. If they have the gospel preached in the town where they dwell, it may be they will give it a hearing one part of the day, and stay at home the other. Even if they wish to hear the plain and powerful preaching of the gospel, how few are there who will travel a mile or two for the purpose, though they go many miles to market for provision for their bodies. They know that the scripture is the law of God, by which they must be acquitted or condemned in judgment, and that the man is blessed "whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth meditate day and night;" yet

they will not be at the pains to read a chapter once a day. They may carry a bible to church, but this is all the use they make of it, for they neglect it all the week. Though they are commanded to *pray without ceasing*, to *pray always*, and *in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make their requests known unto God;* yet they will neither pray constantly in their families, nor yet in secret. Though Daniel would rather be cast to the lions, than forbear praying *three times a day* in his house, where his enemies could hear him, yet these men will rather venture to be an eternal prey to Satan, that "roaring lion," than thus seek their own safety. Or else their cold and heartless prayers invite God to a denial; for among men it is taken for granted, that he who asks but slightly and seldom, cares not much for what he asks.

They must judge meanly of heaven, or be in utter despair of obtaining it, who do not make it the object of their constant and earnest request. If every door were marked, where families do not earnestly seek the Lord, morning and evening in prayer, that his wrath might be poured out upon such prayerless families, our towns would be as places overthrown by the plague; the people being dead within, and the mark of judgment without. I fear when *one* house would escape, *ten* would be marked out for death, and then they might teach their doors to pray, "Lord, have mercy upon us," because the people would not pray for themselves. But especially if we could see what men do in their *secret chambers*, how few should we find, in a whole town that spend one quarter of an hour, morning and evening, in earnest supplication to God for their souls. Oh! how little value do these men set upon eternal rest. Thus do they slothfully neglect all endeavours for their own welfare, except some public duty in the congregation, which custom or credit engages them to. Persuade them to read good books, to learn the grounds of religion in their catechism, and to sanctify the Lord's-day

in prayer, in meditation, and in hearing the word, forbearing all worldly thoughts and conversation; and what a tedious life do they take this to be, as if they thought heaven was not worth doing so much for.

Another sort are *formal professors*, who will be brought to an outward duty, but to the inward work of religion, they never will be persuaded. They will preach, or hear, or read, or talk of heaven; they will pray in their families, and take part with persons, or causes that are *good*, and desire to be esteemed among the godly; but you can never bring them to the more spiritual duties, as to be constant and fervent in secret prayer and meditation; to watch over their hearts, words, and actions; to mortify the flesh, and "not to make provision to fulfil the lusts thereof;" to love and heartily forgive an enemy, and to prefer their brethren before themselves; to lay all they have, or do, at the feet of Christ, and to prize his service and favor before all; and to prepare to die, willingly leaving all to Christ. Hypocrites will never be persuaded to any of these. If a hypocrite entertain the gospel with joy, it is only on the surface of his soul; he never gives the seed any depth of earth, it changes his opinion, but never melts or new moulds his heart, nor sets up Christ there, in full power and authority.

As his religion lies mostly in *opinion*, so does his chief business and conversation. He is usually *an ignorant, bold, conceited dealer in controversies*, rather than an humble follower of simple truth, with fear and obedience. By slighting the judgment and persons of others, and seldom talking with seriousness and humility of the great things of Christ, he shews that his religion dwells only in his brain, and not in his heart; the wind of temptation carries it away as a feather, because his heart is not established with Christ and grace. He never in private conversation humbly bewails his soul's *imperfection*, or tenderly acknowledges his unkindness to Christ, but gathers his

greatest comfort from his being of such a creed or party. The like may be said of the worldly hypocrite, who chokes the gospel with the thorns of worldly cares and desires; he is convinced that he must be religious, or he cannot be saved, and therefore he hears, and reads, and prays, and forsakes his former companions and courses, but he resolves to keep his hold of present things; his *judgment* may say, God is the chief good, but his *heart and affections* never said so. The world hath more of his affections than God, therefore it is his God. Though he does not run after opinions and novelties like the former, yet he will be of that opinion which will best serve his worldly interest; and as one whose spirit is enfeebled by some pestilential disease, so this man's spirit being possessed by the plague of a worldly disposition, how feeble he is in secret prayer, how superficial in examination and meditation, how poor in heart-watchings, how nothing-at-all in loving, and working with God, rejoicing in him, or desiring him; so that both these, and many other sorts of hypocrites, though they will go with you in the easy outside of religion, yet will never be at the pains of inward and spiritual duty.

And even the *godly* themselves are too lazy in seeking their everlasting rest. Alas! what a want of proportion is there between our light and our heat; our professions and our actions. Who makes that haste which he ought to do for heaven? How still we stand; how idly we work; how we talk and jest, and trifle away our time; how deceitfully we perform the work of God; how we hear, as if we heard not, and pray as if we prayed not; and examine and meditate and reprove sin, as if we did it not, and enjoy Christ, as if we enjoyed him not, as if we learned to use the things of heaven, as the Apostle teaches us to use the things of the world. What a *frozen stupidity* has benumbed us. We are dying, and we know it, and yet we *stir* not, we perceive it not. Death knocks, and we hear it

not. God in Christ calls and cries to us, "to-day, if ye will hear my voice, *harden not your hearts*," "work while it is called to-day, the night cometh when no man can work." Now ply your business, labour for yourselves, lay out all your strength and time, *now or never*, and yet you stir no more than if you were *half asleep*. What haste do death and judgment make, how fast do they come, they are almost at us, and yet what little haste we make. Lord, what a *senseless, earthly, hellish thing is a hard heart*. Where is the man, that is in earnest a Christian? Methinks men everywhere make but a trifle of their eternal state, they look after it but a little, by the bye; they do not make it the business of their lives. If I were not sick myself of the same disease, with what tears should I mix this ink; with what groans should I express these complaints; and with what heart-grief should I mourn over this universal deadness!

Do *magistrates* and other officers *among* us, seriously perform their work? Are the *public houses* clear on a *Saturday night* and *Sabbath day?* Are they zealous for God? Do they build up his house? Are they tender of their *honor?* Do they second the word, and fly in the face of sin and sinners, as the *disturbers of our peace*, and the only cause of all our *miseries?* Do they improve all their power, wealth, honor, and influence, for the advantage of the kingdom of Christ, as men that must shortly give an account of their *stewardship?*

Reader, look but to thyself, and answer the question. Ask thy conscience, and suffer it to tell thee truly; hast thou set thy eternal rest before thine eyes, as the great business thou hast to do in this world? Hast thou watched and laboured with all thy might, that "no man take thy crown?" Hast thou made haste, lest thou shouldst come *too late*, and die before the work is done? Hast thou pressed on through crowds of opposition, "to the mark of the prize of thy high calling of God in Christ Jesus;" still

reaching forth unto those "things which are before?" Can *conscience* witness thy secret *cries*, and *groans*, and *tears?* Can thy *family* witness that thou hast taught them the fear of the Lord, and warned them not to go to that "place of torment?" Can thy *ministers* witness that they have heard thee cry out "what must I do to be saved?" Can they witness that thou hast followed them, with complaints of thy corruptions, and with earnest enquiries after the Lord? Can thy *neighbours* about thee witness that thou reprovest the ungodly, and takest pains to save the souls of thy brethren? Let all these witnesses judge this day between God and thee, whether thou art in earnest about eternal rest!

You can tell by his *work* whether your servant has loitered, though you may not have seen him; and so you may by looking at your own work. Are your love to Christ, your faith, your zeal, and your other graces, strong or weak? What are your joys, what is your assurance? Is all in order with you? Are you ready to die this day? Do the souls amongst whom you have conversed bless you? Judge by these, and it will quickly appear whether you have been *labourers* or *loiterers*.

O blessed rest! how unworthily art thou neglected! O glorious kingdom! how art thou undervalued! Little know the careless sons of men what a state they thus neglect; if they knew it, they would surely be of another mind. I hope *thou*, reader, art sensible what a desperate thing it is to trifle about eternal rest, and how deeply thou hast been guilty of this thyself; and I hope, also, that thou wilt not now suffer this conviction to die. Should thy physician tell thee, '*If thou wilt observe but one thing, I doubt not to cure thy disease*,' wouldst thou not observe it? So, I tell thee, if thou wilt observe but this *one thing* for thy soul, I make no doubt for thy strength. Be a Christian indeed: I know not then what can hinder thy happiness. *Far as thou art gone from God, yet seek him*

with all thy heart, and no doubt thou wilt find him: unkind as thou hast been to Jesus Christ, yet seek him heartily, obey him unreservedly, and thy salvation is as sure as if thou hadst it already.

Now, reader, having brought thee to eternal rest, I must shew thee the *grave*, and the glorious *resurrection*. Thou canst not partake of this rest without going down to the grave; thou canst not partake of it without the glorious resurrection. "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.* For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." "But of that day, and of that hour, knoweth no man, no not even the angels which are in beaven;" for there shall be great tribulations in those days, "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light; the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken*; and then shall appear the sign of the *Son of man* in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the *Son of man*, coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect, from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other." St. John the divine saith, "and I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was found no place for them; and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works; and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were

* **See the end of the world—latter part of this chapter.**

judged every man according to his works; and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire."

No sooner are the reprobates gone to their place, but the saints ascend. *Now Christ arises from his judgment-seat*, and with all the glorious company of heaven, marches toward the heaven of heavens. Oh, what a comely march is this! *What songs of triumph are sung!* Christ leads the way; the cherubim attend; the seraphim wait; angels, archangels, principalities, powers, patriarchs, prophets, priests, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors of God's law and gospel following, attend the Judge and King of glory, *singing with such melody as never ear hath heard, shining with majesty as never eye hath seen, rejoicing without measure as never heart conceived. O goodly troop of captains! Each one doth bear a palm of victory in his hand; each doth wear a crown of glory on his head!* The church militant is now triumphant. With a final overthrow have they conquered devils, death, and hell; and now must they enjoy God, life, and heaven for ever.

II. DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND GLORY.

That the dead shall be raised, is a doctrine which lies at the very foundation of our holy religion. If the dead rise not, then is Christ not risen." If it be a thing impossible that man should again live, *as man*, in another state of being, enjoying every faculty, and possessing every power which he here enjoys, but in a degree of perfection unknown on earth; if this be impossible, then the resurrection of the body of Christ is impossible also; and as what is impossible can never be accomplished, that resurrection could not take place, and must consequently be false. But if, on the other hand, the Saviour did really rise, then the resurrection is not impossible; and as what has once occurred may occur again, so "*the man*" Christ

Jesus having been raised from the dead, other men may be raised; and if some may be raised, then the whole human family may also rise; since what is possible to one is, in this instance, possible to all. Thus, then, we must either admit a resurrection, or deny Christianity. For if we deny the possibility of a resurrection, we must deny the resurrection of Christ; or if we admit the resurrection of Christ, we must admit the possibility of a *general* resurrection.

In the 15th chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul reasons well upon this subject: but before we notice the most prominent passages of this celebrated essay, we will refer our remarks to two enquiries. First: Is it the body of flesh and blood (the natural frame) that rises? And, secondly: Is the resurrection of man an immediate, or a future event?

The question respecting the resurrection of the dead had been early agitated in the Corinthian Church. It would seem, from the remarks of the apostle, that some not only pronounced the resurrection "a thing incredible," but boldly declared that "there was no resurrection" "*Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?*" In order to confute these, he proves that with the doctrine of the resurrection, Christianity itself must stand or fall: "if there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith also is vain." Having thus substantiated the general fact, he enters more fully into the nature of this resurrection, and endeavours to convince his readers, that the body of *flesh and blood* does not, and will not rise. "But that man will say, how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die, and that which thou sowest, thou sowest *not the body which shall be*, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some

other grain, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." That the resurrection does not take place upon the *material* frame of man, is therefore evident, not only from the express declaration that the body which "is sown," or interred, is *not the body* which shall afterwards rise, but from the illustration which the apostle uses in support of his doctrine. The interment of man and his resurrection, are compared to the sowing and springing up of a grain of wheat. In this operation, the outward form of the grain, which answers to the body of man, dies, and is cast off. It rises no more. Therefore, if the illustration be correct, neither does the outward covering of man again rise. It moulders away, and is cast off for ever, like the visible form of a seed. But within this outward form there is a *germ*, which, when the former covering is thrown aside, rises up and flourishes in strength and beauty. It is not the same body which was sown, but it is the living form, which, contained within it, only waited the death of its outward body to rise into visible existence. So also is the resurrecterial frame, as the germ in a grain of wheat: that material body is laid in the earth, and there dies; while from its ruins the spiritual body springs up, to flourish in eternal life. If there be any meaning in the apostle's words, he clearly declares—First: That the natural body which is sown, is not the body that is raised. Secondly: That this natural frame, when laid in the grave, is cast off for ever. Thirdly: That the body which rises is spiritual, and is contained in the former, as a germ in a grain of wheat. And Fourthly: That when the natural frame is thrown off, the spiritual body appears in all its beauty, "That which thou sowest, thou sowest *not the body which shall be.*"

To strengthen further the position which he had assumed, the apostle goes forward to prove that there is a spiritual body, distinct from the natural one, and yet connected with it. He proves the possibility of this from the

variety of bodies which exist in the universe, and the difference which is seen among the tribes of creation on this earth. He shews that the glory of the spiritual body is as distinct from that of the material form, as the glory of the sun is from that of the moon, or the glory of one star from that of another; and that its nature differs as much from that of matter, as the nature of men does from that of beasts, fishes from birds, or *celestial* bodies from those that are terrestrial. And hence, after stating the immortality, glory, and power, in which the dead are raised, he adds, "there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body," and the latter is not the natural body changed and reanimated, but a totally distinct and different substance. The first is *natural*, the latter is spiritual. The one is like the first man "of the earth, earthy; the other is like the second man, the Lord from heaven." The first is "the image of the earthy," the other is "the image of the heavenly." While connected with, and living in a world of matter, we must be clothed in a form of matter: but when we associate with the heavenly, and enter the spiritual world, we shall possess their image, and be clothed like them with a spiritual form. "As is the earthly, such are they that are earthly; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." Here, therefore, the apostle proves, *First:* That the spiritual body is entirely different from the natural one, both in nature and substance; and *Secondly:* That it is put on, or becomes visible, when we enter the heavenly world.

To conclude this part of his subject, St. Paul makes a strong and vehement assertion, as a conclusion drawn from what he had already written: "Now this I say, brethren, that *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The body of flesh, therefore, cannot rise to immortality, unless the apostle wrote falsely: nor can any change take place upon it sufficiently powerful to fit it for eternity, unless the latter

part of the sentence is untrue. This body of flesh is corruptible; and the apostle expressly declares it cannot *inherit* incorruption: but if at some future time it is to receive immortality, it *will* at that time inherit incorruption: for to *inherit* implies to receive at a stated period, some advantage left for that purpose by another in time past; and if God has designed that, at a certain period, the corruptible body shall receive an incorruptible nature, then, when that nature *is* received, corruption *will* inherit incorruption, in direct contradiction to the apostle's assertion, that this cannot be. From what the apostle, therefore, has written, we may fairly conclude that it is *not* the body of flesh that rises; and further, that this corruptible body cannot rise.

We turn now to the next enquiry, "is the resurrection a distant and future event, or one immediate on the laying down of the body of matter?" And, first, we may observe, that the common opinion, which represents the spirit of man as living in an intermediate state of happiness, waiting for the resurrection, is completely at variance with St. Paul and his Divine Master. In proving the fact of a resurrection, the apostle affirms, that if there be no resurrection, then those who have "fallen asleep in Christ have perished;" a conclusion which by no means follows, according to the common idea. For, if the expected resurrection be a future and distant event; and if the soul lives in a disembodied state, waiting for that resurrection, yet receiving all the happiness of which that state is capable; then, though that resurrection should never take place, those who have died in Christ *have not perished:* unless the enjoyment of happiness can be called perishing. Yet St. Paul says, if there is no resurrection, they *have* perished. Either, then the apostle reasons inconclusively, or the common idea is wrong Again, in his second epistle to the Corinthian Church, contrasting their state on earth with their state in glory, he says, "For we know, that if

our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be *clothed upon* with our house which is from heaven: if so be, that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burthened: *not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon*, that mortality might be swallowed up in life." In this passage there are a few things to be noticed. *First:* The distinction which he makes between the natural and the spiritual body, and to which we before referred. The one, he calls a "tabernacle," a temporary erection, intended to serve a particular purpose, and then to be taken down. The other is a "building," not a mere tent, but a substantial and complete edifice. This "tabernacle" is not to be changed or beautified, but to be dissolved; and is thus essentially different from the building, which is "eternal in the heavens," for it is only temporary and "earthly." *Secondly:* The apostle does not seem to have had any idea of what is called a "separate state of souls." He expected when the natural body was dissolved, to enter at once into his spiritual form. So far from wishing to live in the state referred to, he expresses his anxious desire to be clothed with that form; and in reference to the shadowy existence into which the heathens expected to enter, where all was "aerial substance, and an empty shade;" he declares that he has no wish to be "unclothed," to live without a body, but to "be clothed upon," or to receive instead of his natural body, a spiritual and immortal frame. In all this it is evident that the apostle expected immediately after the death of his body, to receive his spiritual form; or, in other words, to experience a resurrection. The reception of this glorious body he considers essential to eternal happiness, and a *preliminary step* to its enjoyment; for so far from looking for happiness in an *unbodied state*, he deprecates the idea of entering into it, as something

which is not desirable. Taking this view of the subject, his conclusion in the 15th chapter is both proper and reasonable. If the resurrection is a preliminary step to future life,—if it must take place before such life can be received, then there can be no future life without it, and, consequently, if there be no resurrection, those who have died believing in Christ, and expecting eternal life, must have *perished*, by sinking into non-existence. And this, it would seem, was the opinion of some of those who, in the apostle's day, troubled the church, and against whom he declared that "we shall not all sleep."

We might go much further in our extracts from the apostle, did our limits permit. One expression more we will notice. In the 32d verse of the 15th chapter he says, "What advantageth it me if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Obviously teaching, that if there be no resurrection, we may as well enjoy to the utmost the pleasures of the world; since piety, and even suffering in the cause of piety, will in such case advantage no one. Yet such an assertion, according to the common belief, is any thing but true. That belief teaches, that the spirits of the righteous, separated from their bodies, are rewarded with happiness; and that the disembodied souls of the wicked are punished for their crimes. If, then, happiness be worth seeking, and torment worth avoiding, piety is useful, and essentially *necessary*, even though the body never rise, and though that disembodied state is eternally permanent. To advise any one, under such circumstances, to give way to the vicious pleasures of the world, is contrary to reason, prudence, and common sense. Either, then, the apostle spoke foolishly, or the common belief is untrue: the former we cannot admit, we must, therefore, acknowledge the latter.

But, connecting what we have already observed, with this verse, the sense of apostle is clear, and its correctness undeniable. If resurrection is the entrance into future

being, then, without this resurrection, there can be no future existence; and if there is no future state, then piety and wickedness, can only produce temporary effects; and piety, in the time of the apostle, appeared to have the worst place, "for if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable;" and the wisest course of conduct is that recommended, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

We turn from the apostle Paul to notice the words of the Saviour. When the Sadducees (who, like the false teachers in the Corinthian Church, affirmed there was no resurrection,) came to try their philosophy upon the Redeemer, after answering the question they had put to him, he said, "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead but of the living." And so powerful was the effect of this argument upon his opponents, that they were at once completely silenced. Yet, if we consider the resurrection as a future and distant event, this strong and powerful argument is deprived of meaning and even of sense. It was *the resurrection* that our Lord attempted to prove; and, in order to do this, he *adduced Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob as witnesses, while yet, neither Abraham, nor Isaac, nor Jacob had experienced any resurrection*, but were living in an intermediate and disembodied state! Hence a learned writer in the Church of England has acknowledged, that though our Lord's argument proves the *immortality of the soul*, it does not prove the resurrection of the body. According to this writer, therefore, our Lord *egregiously failed in argument:* for it was not the *immortality of the soul*, but *the resurrection of the body* that he designed to prove.

With the ideas, however, which we have given from the apostle, the argument of our Lord assumes it proper form.

Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob were living: there could be no future life without previous resurrection; therefore, these patriarchs had risen with the spiritual body, and were "as the angels of God." And if Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob had risen, then, as God is no respecter of persons, all will likewise be raised unto the promised existence. In this view, the point which our Lord aimed at is attained; but with the common idea, our Lord was, as St. Paul is said to be, an inconclusive reasoner.

We may, therefore, conclude, first, that it is the spiritual body and not the natural one that rises—"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." And, secondly, that this resurrection takes place on the dissolution of our present existence, and not at a future and distant period: hence the language of our blessed Redeemer to the repentant thief upon the cross,—"Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

III. THE END OF THE WORLD.

In our last head we briefly adverted to the doctrine of the resurrection, as laid down by St. Paul, and substantiated by his Master. We then stated that the body which rises is not *material* but *spiritual*, and that this resurrection takes place immediately on the death of the material body. We now proceed to the doctrines of the judgment, and the end of the world, upon each of which we shall make a few observations.

First, then, it is commonly understood, that as the resurrection will not take place until this world is about to be destroyed, so, at that period, the bodies of the dead being raised, will be reunited to their spirits, and being then brought forward to judgment, will be for ever happy or miserable, according to their conduct while on earth. The common doctrine of the judgment, depends, therefore, upon the resurrection, as its key-stone, and if this be removed, the edifice falls at once: but we have shown that there is no ground to expect any thing like a general re-

surrection of the material bodies of the dead:—that St. Paul overthrows such expectation by teaching, that the body which rises, is *not* the body which is interred, and that no sooner is the "earthly tabernacle" laid down, than we have another building of God, eternal and spiritual; consequently, that the resurrection is an immediate event. Since, therefore, there is not any ground for expecting a day of general resurrection, the doctrine of a general judgment has lost its principal support. This will appear more clearly, if we consider the subject a little further.

It is generally understood that the last judgment will take place upon *this earth* and immediately before the general conflagration. Upon this earth, or at least in the *region of visible nature,* the innumerable tribes of men are to be assembled: in the same region is the great white throne to be seen, and into it the Almighty Judge is to descend, accompanied by his angels. But it must be remembered, that whether the judgment will occur at some distant period or not, the bodies which are raised, will be *spiritual bodies.* Now *spirit* has no relation either to time or space. It exists not *in space,* nor can it so exist. That which exists in a universe of matter, must be subject to the laws of matter: it must be bounded by space, and possess the several qualities of length, breadth, and thickness. It must, therefore, occupy a certain portion of that space—it must have a relative position with other visible objects, and be at a determinate distance from them. But *spirit* is subject to none of these laws. It is not bounded by any thing material; it occupies no portion of the visible world: it is neither visible nor tangible by any material organ. It cannot, therefore, exist in a *material* universe.

Such, then, will be the bodies of the risen. Spiritual and not material: and consequently not existing in a material world. As then that which is spiritual does not exist in a world of matter, so neither will the bodies of those who are raised, appear in this world at the judgment.

That which is spiritual can only exist in a spiritual region; and as the bodies at the resurrection are *spiritual*, in a spiritual region *only* can they be judged. The judgment, therefore, whenever it takes place, must occur in the world of spirits, and not on the visible earth.

And this at once brings us to what is called "the end of the world." It is evident, that if the judgment takes place in the region of spirits, it will, whenever it occurs, be invisible to those who may at that time be on earth. For the organs of the body cannot discern that which is spiritual: or if it is seen at all, it must be by those whose eyes, like those of the prophets, "are opened" to behold the otherwise invisible world. As, therefore, the judgment will be in the very nature of things a spiritual event, all the pomp and circumstance attending it must be spiritual likewise.

And, indeed, the description which is given of that great event, is incapable of being understood in any other than a spiritual sense. The "moon being turned into blood—the stars falling from heaven—the elements melting with fervent heat—the great white throne—the trumpet—and the descent in the clouds," are evidently never intended to be *literally* understood; and for this simple reason, that so understood they are mere nonsense. If it be supposed that by such an assertion we degrade the scriptures, we deny the imputation. In all languages there are expressions which, though true in their *meaning*, are false in the *letter;* and the language by which God has oftentimes condescended to speak to man, is intended by symbolical or outward imagery, to convey spiritual meaning.—If, however, it be asserted, that these expressions convey literal facts, let three questions be set at rest. 1. Since God, the author of reason, never speaks in opposition to reason, let it be shewn, that the descriptions above given are perfectly *reasonable*. 2. As God never acts without a motive, let the motive be shewn which can lead to a destruction of the universe. 3. Since the same descriptions

were given of the *first* coming of the Saviour, let the reason be explained why they should not in the former case be *spiritually* accomplished, as they certainly were in the latter?

Whoever is acquainted either with the nature of the heavenly bodies, or with the component elements which form the visible universe, must see at once the absurdity of a *literal* interpretation. It is true, such a one may compel reason to bow before what he calls faith; but he never can make such a faith either consistent or reasonable; because consistence is the agreement of one thing with another; and the character which such a man assigns to God, as a loving, wise, and powerful being, is completely at variance with the words and actions which, in the confidence of his faith, he attributes to him. And having thrown reason out of his creed, it must to all intents and purposes be an *unreasonable* belief, or, in other words, a faith opposed to knowledge and common sense. The same may be said of "the great white throne," and of "the trumpet." Either these are material objects, or they are not. If they are *material*, then He who sits on the one, and they who use the other, must be *material beings;* and thus, "with one fell swoop," we materialize both God and his angels. If, however, "God is a spirit," and if "his angels are spirits," then both the throne and the trumpet must be spiritual. But if they are spiritual they cannot exist in a material universe, nor can they appear in space; and, consequently, the literal meaning is gone for ever.

Besides, what motive can induce the Creator of all to destroy that world which was created for his glory? We have every reason to believe that in the latter days the moral condition of man will be materially changed, and the influence of pure religion extended to every part of the earth. In such case, the world will indeed become a theatre on which the glory of God will be seen, and his divine power acknowledged. It cannot be therefore the

increase of evil which will lead to its destruction, for according to the sacred records, evil will diminish instead of increasing. It cannot be *love*, for love seeks not to destroy, but to beautify and make happy. It cannot be *wisdom*, for when earth is renewed, and its inhabitants are restored to piety and peace, it will become a school for glory, a nursery in which the infant soul will be prepared to fill higher and more exalted stations in the maturity of heaven. It cannot be to shew his *power*, for the power of the Most High is always regulated by love and wisdom; he never operates capriciously, unwisely, or in opposition to love. It cannot be to increase the splendor of the judgment; for we have already shewn, that as the bodies of the risen are spiritual, that judgment must take place in the world of spirits, and not on earth. It cannot be to add to his glory, for the glory of God is the extension of human happiness; and when man is restored to piety, and earth is a preparation for heaven, the destruction of this earth would limit instead of extending the glory of God. There is no motive which can possibly lead to a literal destruction; and without a motive God never acts.

Once more. Let it be noticed that the same descriptions which are given of the *second* coming of the Lord, were also given of his first advent. The heavens were to pass away; the stars were to fall; the sun was to be darkened; the moon was to be as blood; and the powers of heaven were to be shaken. Yet at the Lord's appearance no such events occurred *literally*. It is true, the sun, moon, and stars of the Jewish heaven—its love, faith, and doctrines were darkened and defaced. It is true, that *that* heaven and earth did pass away, and a new heaven and a new earth were established; a new church, new doctrines, and new principles of thought and action; but the *material* universe was unchanged. And why should these descriptions be literally fulfilled at the second

coming of the Lord, when they bore a spiritual signification on his first appearance?

The greater part of those passages which have been referred to a literal destruction of all things, are now, even by the advocates of the doctrine, applied to very different subjects. The passing away of the heavens, under the sixth seal, is said by Bishop Newton to describe the downfall of Paganism, and the full establishment of Christianity. The descent of the new Jerusalem, Dr. Hammond observes, is descriptive of some great benefit received by men on this earth, and not in the state of glory. The prophecy of our Lord is referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the "consummation" not of the visible world, but of the "*age* or period of the *church*." All have seen the absurdity of the commonly received meaning; though their creed forbade them to reject the doctrine.

In conclusion. Since the literal meaning in unreasonable; since there is no motive which can lead to the destruction of this earth; since the same descriptions referred to *spiritual* things at our Saviour's first coming; and since the principal passages are allowed even by the believers in the doctrine, to refer to other subjects; we have reason to conclude, 1st, that the expected destruction, is not a destruction of the visible earth, but of the *state of the church;* and, 2d, that "the new heaven and the new earth," together with the descent of the new Jerusalem, point out a restoration of Christianity, to its former purity and glory.

IV. THE NATURE OF HEAVEN.

In our note upon the resurrection of man, we adduced a few plain and scriptural arguments, to prove that the body of flesh and blood, when cast off, is never resumed; and that the resurrection of the spiritual form takes place immediately after death, and is not a distant event. In speaking, therefore, of that state of existence on which the righteous man enters, when he quits this life, we must

premise one thing, which seems to spring naturally from the arguments formerly adduced; that is, *that man after death appears in a real and substantial form; that he is not a mere shadow, a thought without a subject, but is in every sense of the word a man, possessing all those faculties and powers, both of mind and body, which raise him above the brute creation, and constitute him an "image of God."*

We are too apt to attribute to the body of matter, faculties and feelings which in truth do not belong to it. If we examine the very lowest sensations—the mere bodily senses (as they are called) of feeling, hearing, and sight, we shall at once be convinced, that the seat of those sensations is not to be sought in *the body*, but in the spirit. Examine a dead corpse: look at the members and organs,—the eye, the ear, the hands; every bodily instrument is in its proper place, every limb is perfect; why then does it not move? "Why," you exclaim, "because it no longer lives, because the spirit is fled." And if so, then it was the *spirit* that felt, and not the body; it was the spirit, and not the body, that saw, and perceived, and acted by it. The body *in itself*, however perfect in its form, is lifeless and inert; a mass of inanimate matter, as void of sensation and feeling as the dust from which it was taken. It does indeed serve the spirit as a medium of communication with this lower world; but of itself it feels nothing, it hears nothing, it perceives nothing; the smallest sensation, the slightest feeling exists not in the body, but the spirit within it; take this away and the body is destroyed.

And if it is the spirit to which all our sensations are to be referred, then this spirit must be an *organized substance*, possessing, with these powers of sensation, various organs, by and through which these feelings are received; for to speak of a spirit acting and feeling, without the *means* of feeling and action—seeing and hearing, without organs of

hearing and sight, is manifestly absurd. The real and spiritual man, therefore, as he alone sees, and hears, and feels, so he must possess every organ necessary for the reception and communication both of pain and pleasure.

As an organized substance too, *the spirit must have form*, for that which has no form is incapable of being seen. Now it is the general belief of all nations, and more especially of the Christian world, that after death they shall see and converse with their former friends: but how (let me ask) *are* they, or in fact how *can* they *see* them if they have neither shape nor figure? When we say we *see* an object, we mean that we discern its shape; and every object which is capable of being seen, must have *some* shape in order to be perceived. An object *without form* (if we can think of such) can never be an object *of sight;* and if the spirit has *no form*, it can never be seen. How then are we to see our friends hereafter? How are we to discern the shape of that which has no shape, and to see the figure of that which is without figure? If we say this is possible, we run into absurdity; and to avoid it we must admit, either that our hopes of again seeing our departed friends are vain and fallacious; or that those happy spirits which we hope to see, have a definite form and figure, which, when released from the material body, we shall discern and recognize.

And this figure is the human form. No other is so dignified, or so correspondent to the powers of a rational being. To assert that the spirits of the departed possess some other form or appearance, is as much at variance with general reason, as it is with the true philosophy of Scripture and the dictates of common sense. In expecting to meet again their deceased friends, the world in general, whether consisting of the savage or the man of refinement, universally expect to see them in the form they bore on earth. At least such is the idea of the mind when unwarped by superstition and prejudice; and, in-

deed, how can we expect to *know* the friends, whom here we loved, unless their form resembles that with which we were once acquainted? There must be some outward mark of resemblance to admit of instant recognition; and hence throughout the Scriptures we find, that whenever departed spirits became visible, they were seen as *men* with every part of the human form in its perfect state. Thus Moses and Elias appeared to the apostles,—thus the Lord himself appeared after his resurrection; and thus too when John in vision beheld the assembly of the saints, he beheld them as *men*,—glorious indeed and dignified,—yet still as men, possessing the perfect human form, and surrounding the throne of their Master.

We conclude, therefore, that the spirit of man, is an organized substance, possessing every faculty in the highest state of perfection; that as a substance it has a real and definite form; and that this form which it possesses is the likeness of man.

Once more we may observe, that as matter is tangible by matter, or as the material body of man can touch the material body, so spirit is tangible by spirit, and the spiritual body, though invisible to the material eye and intangible to the material organs, can be both seen and felt by the spiritual body. This proposition is founded on the axiom, that matter can act upon matter and spirit upon spirit, and hence it follows, that the form which the spirit possesses is not a mere *assumed* appearance,—a form which

> ——— subsists without the body's aid,
> Aerial substance, and an empty shade;

but a real and spiritual substance, and the more so *because* it is spiritual; for while that which is material has a constant tendency to dissolution, that which is spiritual is fixed and eternal.

And if this be correct, if it be true that man after death is as truly a man as he was before; if every power and faculty which seemed to lodge in his material frame, is found in far higher perfection in that spiritual body which he then inhabits; if in fact he is a spiritual man, visible and tangible to his fellow spirits; then, *the region where those spiritual men reside must be filled with visible objects.* Heaven cannot be a mere empty void—a desert where, except themselves, the inhabitants perceive nothing beautiful, perfect, and glorious. Such an idea is neither consistent with reason nor scripture. It is not consistent with reason, for it is impossible to conceive of visible and real men, and men too in a state of glory, standing upon nothing—surrounded by nothing—and (except themselves) perceiving nothing. If there are visible human beings in heaven, there must be other visible objects there. Why has God implanted the senses of sight, of hearing, and of touch, in the spirit of man, if in the world of spirits there are no objects to be seen, no sounds to be heard, and no substances to be felt; if all is darkness and vacuity, without visible beauty, or surrounding glory? If the spirit sees, there are in heaven things to be seen; if it hears, there are sounds to be heard; if it can feel, there are objects of feeling.

In exact agreement with the last sentiment, are the words of St. Paul, who describes himself as being "caught up to the third heaven, where he *heard* unspeakable things which it was not lawful for man to utter;" and every description of the eternal state of blessedness, either by our Lord himself, or by his disciples, most clearly shows that as the righteous have peace within, so have they objects of glory without. That these objects should resemble things on earth, though more beautiful, because spiritual, is by no means the dream of a fanatic. The very descriptions to which we have referred, state such resemblance, and it is consonant to reason, that if earth "is but the shadow of

heaven," the *substance* must bear some likeness to the shadow proceeding from it. The best and noblest of our poets (and poets sometimes speak truth) have not scrupled to give to heaven all the beauty of the earth, without its frailty and sorrow. Thus one, speaking of the habitation of the blessed spirits, tells us of

> "Hill and valley clothed with verdure green,
> That never fades; and tree, and herb, and flower,
> That never fade; and many a river, rich
> With nectar, winding pleasantly,—
> And mansion of celestial mould, and work
> Divine. And oft delicious music sung
> By saint and angel bands that walk the vales,
> Or mountain tops,———————"
>
> POLLOK'S COURSE OF TIME.

It may be said, that all these are the figures of poetry, not the declarations of reason; but do they not harmonize with scripture? Nay, does not reason unbiassed, assent to them; for if we connect no visible objects with our ideas of heaven, what idea can we possibly form of it?

Let us but for a moment cast off all thought of visible things, and then try to imagine a heaven *without* them; and we shall find either that we have no idea *at all*, or that it is vague and dark, and filled with confusion.

Still it must not be forgotten that all these things are *spiritual*, and not material. As the inhabitants of heaven are spiritual beings, so are the objects that surround them spiritual also. Heaven then is a place filled with objects of beauty and glory, correspondent to the pure and holy feelings of those who inhabit it.

When, however, we say that heaven is a *place*, we use the word in a different sense from that which it commonly bears. By *place* is generally understood local extension, bounded by space, and having connexion with time; but by *place*, when applied to the world of realities, we mean local situation, not connected with time or material space,

but depending entirely upon the ruling love of the individual. As then place on earth is regulated by material objects, so place in heaven is measured and regulated by objects which are spiritual; thus the visible things of heaven, though not existing in the space of matter, are are not less real nor substantial than the visible things of earth; on the contrary, they are more substantial, and more enduring. Here, every thing is in a state of alteration—visible nature is the region of changes: there, all is enduring, solid, and eternal—without corruption and without decay. Well, therefore, said Dr. Young,

> "All, all on the earth is SHADOW, all beyond
> Is SUBSTANCE."

We notice, in the next place, the *blessedness* of heaven. That this is *eternal*, we need not repeat, as it is included in what we have already said; as the glory is everlasting, so is the blessedness; but we must distinguish between the visible glory of heaven, and the happiness which is enjoyed by its inhabitants. It is not the objects which surround them, perfect and beautiful though they be, that communicate to them their delight, but the possession of their Lord, in his love, his wisdom, and his operation.

That the presence of God constitutes heaven, is a truth allowed by all parties of Christians. Indeed, the scriptures are so clear and decisive upon this point, that it is not possible to deny it, without, at the same time, denying the truth of revelation. But the presence of God equally extends to hell; nor is there a single spirit in the regions of misery, who is not constantly surrounded by his Maker. How then does the presence of God in *heaven*, cause peace and blessedness, while that same presence in *hell* is the source of misery and torment? To understand this, we must consider that every man while on earth, is the maker of his own destiny, and forms within himself his own heaven or his own hell. To the man who, by love, faith, and

good works, has been created anew, and formed into an image of God, his presence and influence is the source of peace and joy; whilst to the unregenerate, whose minds and will are directly at variance with holiness, that same influence causes only unhappiness and pain. Thus the beams of the sun are to the eagle the source of light and pleasure, while to the bird of night, they are the cause of darkness and pain. The influence of God is unvaried, both in heaven and in hell; but in one, it is in agreement with the affections of the inhabitants, while in the other, it is in direct opposition to all their views, affections, and delights.

And as man, on earth, renders himself capable of receiving the divine influence, or closes his mind against it, so he brings himself into immediate connexion with the angels of God, or the spirits of evil; for, as we formerly observed, likeness of affection joins spirit with spirit; and when death divests him of his natural clothing, he comes into the society of those whom he resembles in his desires and love. A man must therefore have the nature of heaven here, or he can never enjoy its glory hereafter; for heaven is not given by a mere act of mercy, without reference to character, those only being capable of its enjoyment, whose souls are in a fit state to receive and rejoice in the divine influence.

Love is the first and purest principle which enters into heavenly delight; yet this love may very properly be divided into three distinct kinds, each having its proper object, and yet each joining and uniting with the others—the love of God, the love of truth, and simple obedience. It is true, all these are required to constitute "a perfect man;" but in every individual, one or the other of these principles holds the supremacy. Death changes not the love of the soul, nor does it change the quality of that love; and the general body of Christians on earth may be divided and classed according to these component principles of

holy affection. Thus there are some, whose whole affections are devoted solely to God, the object of their minds is goodness alone; and truth and obedience in outward works, though still existing, have comparatively but a low and very subordinate value. There are others, in whom religion developes itself chiefly in the understanding; it is their end and aim to search out and dwell upon the doctrines of Christianity; their lives are one continual combat against *error*, as the lives of the former are against evil. We may perceive this distinction existing even amongst the first disciples of the Lord. The writings of John breathe love, and love only; it seems to have swallowed up in his mind every other passion. The Epistles of Paul, on the other hand, are devoted principally to the elucidation of truth, and the overturning of error; the one viewed God chiefly in his quality of *love*, the other more immediately in his attribute of *wisdom*. But besides these two classes, there is another, composed of the great mass of Christians, namely, those who without being able to enter deeply into the study of doctrines, yet, from a holy principle, obey those precepts which their religion commands. In none of these classes does one principle exist without the others; all of them possess love, faith, and obedience; but in the first *love* predominates; in the second, *truth* reigns; and in the third, *obedience* is the chief characteristic.

Now, (as we have already observed) such as man is here, such he will be hereafter; and as likeness of affection joins one spirit to another, so they who resemble each other in the nature of their love, will by such resemblance be united together in the spiritual world. *All* the blessed are joined by the divine love, but as this love is varied in form, according to the state of reception in individuals, so will there be various societies in that heavenly world, and various degrees of glory; according to our Lord's words, "in my father's house are *many mansions*."

It is therefore the reception of THE LORD in his divine influence alone, which constitutes heaven; and as this influence is received, the degrees of glory and happiness are varied. Every angel possesses as much delight and pleasure as his mind can enjoy, yet "as one star differeth from another star in glory," so do the blessed in heaven differ from each other.

The kingdom of heaven is generally supposed to be a state of complete rest from every work of charity and usefulness; or if that rest is at all broken, it is only by the repetition of worship and praise: however such an opinion became general, it is neither in agreement with reason or scripture. Perfect rest from every useful function is not pleasure, but weariness; and such a rest deserves not the name of *holiness*, but of *indolence*. It is much more reasonable to conclude with Dr. Watts, that though heaven is a rest from sin and sorrow, from toil and weariness, it is by no means such a rest as lays all the active powers to sleep; and that though divine worship and praise may *frequently* occupy the heavenly societies, yet there may be other employments, errands of mercy, and love, and wisdom, in which they may be engaged. Heaven is not a kingdom of *idleness*, but a kingdom of *use*, where each is employed in communicating happiness to those around him; and where in proportion as happiness is communicated, a greater portion of joy is received. Where all are bound together by love, all loving each, and each loving all; a place where selfishness is unknown. No narrow contracted feelings are there. There is no hoarding up of pleasure; each lives not for himself but others, and these in return live not for themselves but for him, while love, supreme love to their Maker, unites them to him, and to happiness for ever.

Heaven, therefore, is a place of glory, in which all the righteous live, not as shadows, but as real and substantial men; yet the mere outward glory is not that which con-

stitutes the happiness of the blessed, but the love and truth of God, received and communicated. And as the reception of this love differs according to the states of individuals, so do the degrees of glory differ in the heavenly mansions.

Let then "the world their wisdom boast;" let them *hope* for heaven, while leading a life of evil and error! Let them trust to faith alone, while love and obedience are not to be found! Our heaven is the union of love and wisdom, of charity and faith, of goodness and truth; and our preparation is a constant and watchful care to get these principles implanted in the mind here, that so they may expand and bear fruit hereafter. Yet not by our own exertion alone, but by virtue, and through the medium of that blessed atonement, which THE LORD himself wrought, when subduing evil, he overcame the world.

All our ideas of the blessedness of heaven, must however fall far short of the reality. He who is in the love of God, and who enjoys the "peace that passeth understanding," feels and knows some little of its happiness; but death only can teach us by experience, the height of that glory, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which the heart itself has never yet conceived." We may however say with a poet, who seldom employed his pen on this subject,

> "Go wing thy flight from star to star:
> From world to luminous world, as far
> As the universe spreads her flaming wall;
> Take all the pleasures of all the spheres,
> And multiply each by endless years,
> One moment in heaven is worth them all!"
>
> MOORE'S LALLA ROOKH.

CHAPTER VII.

INTRODUCTION.

I. ON THE JUBILEE.

The seventh year, or year of *release*, was a continued festival, and season of spiritual instruction; a relief to poor debtors; a monitor to teach the Hebrews that the land was the Lord's property; and his providence, not its fruitful soil, their security for provision; it began with the seventh sacred month. The land lay untilled; the spontaneous growth was the property of the poor, the fatherless, and the widow. The people spent their time in reading, and hearing the law of the Lord; every debt owing by a Hebrew was forborne, if not forgiven. On any seventh year, a Hebrew bond-servant, who had served six years, was dismissed free, if he pleased, with a variety of compliments from his master. Did this typify our acceptable year of gospel release? Jesus, having finished his course of bond-service, is dismissed from under the law, and hath received gifts for men. What spiritual rest and instruction, what forgiveness of sin, what blessings spontaneously flowing from the love of God, are exhibited and given to us poor sinners of the Gentiles; and when we have finished our course on earth, with what solemnity shall we be dismissed into the everlasting joy of our Lord. Read Levit. xxv. 2, to the 7th verse; Deut. xv. 18; Isaiah lxi. 1, 3, and lxiii. 4.

The institution of the jubilee was none of the least remarkable regulations in the commonwealth of Israel, and deserves our special attention; besides the rest which the land enjoyed every seventh, it was ordained to rest also every fiftieth year; the husbandman was forbid to subdue his field with the plough, or to scatter seed in the furrows.

What the earth spontaneously produced, whether corn or vines, might be indifferently used by all, and, as before observed, was the especial property of the poor inhabitants of the land. The God who commanded this, was fully able to compensate the want of harvest and vintage, by crowning the year preceding with uncommon plenty: but besides the intermission of fertile labour in this extraordinary year, it was the will of God, that by its welcome approach, the poor Israelite should reap great advantages, and enjoy very valuable immunities. The insolvent debtor was delivered from his creditor; the hired servant regained his former liberty; and inheritances reverted to the families to which they originally belonged. The joyful sound of trumpets announced the commencement of this year of liberty; and they were blown on the day of atonement, when they were fasting for their sins, and afflicting their souls. This was the fast the Lord did choose to undo heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free; in short, it was a time for the restitution of all things in the commonwealth, and a remedy against the caprice of fortune; or rather the inequalities which sovereign providence introduces among men as to their outward state. But let us raise our thoughts still higher, to the year of grace, and day of salvation, wherein far greater immunities are proclaimed to the human race than were announced to the Israelites by the trumpet of the jubilee. Detesting the impiety of this sacred ordinance in the pretended jubilee of Rome, let us take occasion to meditate on that happy season, which, in allusion to this very thing, is styled by the prophet, "the year of God's redeemed, the acceptable year of the Lord." Joyful was the sound to the poor Israelite who was involved in debt, for which he was obliged to part with his beloved freedom, and to sell the inheritance of his fathers; but more joyful is the sound of liberty to the wretched sinner, who is deep in arrears to the divine justice, a miserable captive of sin and wrath,

and utterly deprived of all inheritance in the heavenly kingdom. "O blessed are the people that know this joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the brightness of thy countenance, in thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Psalm lxxxix. 15, 16. But a more particular attention to what Moses informs us about this grand festival, will discover unto us the resemblance between the trumpet of the jubilee, and the trumpet of the gospel, whose sound (far from being confined to Judea alone,) is gone through all the earth.

The cancelling of debts at this happy season, may well be viewed as an emblem of the forgiveness of sin, or that dreadful debt of punishment which all the human race owe to eternal justice, the most inexorable of all creditors.

The debt we are born under, and every day contracting more, is marked every farthing in the book of God's remembrance; and the time of the final reckoning is hastening apace. Miserable they whom that awful day shall find without a surety. How can we discharge it who are not able so much as to number it? But these are the charming accents of the gospel jubilee, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out your iniquities for mine own sake, and will not remember your sins." Isaiah xliii. 25. Dismiss your fears, ye poor insolvent debtors, for there is forgiveness with your great Creditor; and for the sake of his dear Son, he will not enter into judgment with you.

The release of servants, and delivering from bondage, is another joyful sound of the acceptable year of the Lord, a privilege so much more glorious than the liberty of the Israelites, as the slavery from which we are redeemed, is more miserable than the service to which they were bound themselves. Oh! sin, what an imperious lord art thou! and thy service, of all others, the most ignominious, the most laborious, and the most unprofitable, "for the wages of sin is death." But the gospel trumpet says to the pri-

soners, "Go forth;" and to them in darkness, "Show yourselves." Isaiah xlix. 9. And when they know the truth, the truth shall make them free. At three of the feasts, namely, the passover, pentecost, and the feast of tabernacles, all the Hebrew males, capable of travel, were to attend with gifts to their God; nor did ever the enemy invade their land till the wickedness of the Jews was great, or the feasts no longer binding, as when Titus laid siege to Jerusalem. Many of these feasts were in the beginning of the month, or in the beginning of their sacred or civil year. Does not this teach us, that all our holiness or happiness must be founded on our feasting by faith, on Jesus's atonement and fulness.

Our Lord said to the Jews, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." He said this to persons whose ancestors had been delivered from the bondage of Egypt, and who declared for themselves that they never were in bondage to any man. He did not therefore mean a temporal, but a spiritual freedom; accordingly he explained himself by saying, whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin, and so much the servant of sin, as to be wholly incapable of delivering himself from its bondage. Upon which account he added, if the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed: none else could release them. But we observe, that upon this great truth of man's slavery under sin and Satan, the whole Bible is founded. It would be absurd to speak of the fall of man, of his entire apostacy from God, of redemption by, and of hope in, a Saviour; if man were free in the use of his powers, or if indeed he had power to assert his freedom, and by his own strength, either of mind, will, or affections, could turn himself unto God. The fact is, he is so tied and bound in the chain, both of his sins and sinfulness, that he cannot get forth; nor hath he any inclination, except what may arise from the slavish

fear of hell, or from some inconveniencies to his natural lusts and passions. Hence he is looked upon as dead before God; dead in trespasses and sins, without any spiritual life, and consequently without the least natural power to raise himself, or the least desire after any such thing. Like the bones in the prophecy, he lies in the open valley of the world; and lo! he is very dry. The Spirit of God alone could restore life to such bones as these, which represent the whole house of Israel, or the whole family and church of God by nature: and if these were dry bones in their natural state, can we suppose that there is more vigour or sense of spiritual life in the rest of the world; if these had no spirit in them till God was pleased to bestow it, where upon earth may we expect to find the spirit of life beside?

The bondage of corruption (as it is called) though it falls upon all men, yet none of them feel it till they are quickened with Christ, and made alive unto God; and this is a further demonstration of their ruined state, and helpless misery; when they have life given, they groan under it, and look out for a release; and where this comes to pass, the release shall surely be found, because the life was given for that very purpose.

The liberty which the Lord bestows, is really life from the dead, and he himself is the life of that liberty; he exercises, augments, carries it on, and supports it from day to day, insomuch that his people cannot so properly say of themselves, that *they live*, as that *their Lord liveth in them*. Thus they *live by faith*, and walk by faith; that is, through faith they receive all their spiritual life, and are enabled to proceed in it, and to use it. As the rational life flows from the union of the soul with the body, but so as chiefly to arise from the soul itself, so spiritual life flows from the union of the spirit of Christ with the soul; the spirit being the first and chief principle of it: for what the soul is to the human frame, that Christ is by his spirit to the soul.

In this way, through infinite wisdom and mercy, the children of God find all their life, liberty, holiness, perseverance and peace.

"Captain of thine enlisted host,
Display thy glorious banner high;
The summons send from coast to coast,
And call a numerous army nigh.

"A solemn jubilee proclaim;
Proclaim the great sabbatic day;
Assert the glories of thy name;
Spoil Satan of his wish'd-for prey.

"Bid, bid thy heralds publish loud,
The peaceful blessings of thy reign;
And when they speak of sprinkling blood,
The mystery to the heart explain.

"Fight for thyself, O Jesus, fight,
The travail of thy soul regain;
Before the blind, make darkness light,
And crooked paths do thou make plain."

II. ON THE DISPERSION AND RESTORATION OF THE JEWS.

The peculiarities in the history and character of the Jews, are too obvious to escape notice. That these extraordinary people should have been preserved through so many ages, amidst such unparalleled sufferings, and remaining altogether *distinct* from the nations where they have been scattered, is a continual miracle, and the continued fulfilment of prophecy. The Lord has declared "he will not utterly destroy Jacob; but he will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." It is a fact, that the prophecies concerning the Jews is irresistible, in their being thus preserved, during such cruel and almost uninterrupted persecutions; but their

supernatural preservations were intended to subserve some grand purpose, as well as to confirm the truth of the Christian religion. We are fully assured their scattered tribes shall one day be brought together, and formed again into a nation, and for this we have high authority, as many circumstances are favorable to the assertion, *that they are preserved for some signal favor. First.*—They have no inheritance of land in any country, their possessions being chiefly money and jewels; they may, therefore, transfer themselves with greater facility to their native soil. *Second.*—The contempt and harshness with which they are treated in most of the countries where they sojourn, will make them more willing to assemble in their own land. *Third.*—They carry on a correspondence with each other throughout the whole world, and, consequently, must all know when circumstances begin to favor their return. *Fourth.*—Most of them speak and write the Hebrew language, as well as that of the country where they reside; they are, therefore, possessed of a universal language and character. *Fifth.*—The Jews constantly retain a hope, that they themselves shall be once more restored to their own land. And we are told, that the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim; afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days. From the societies formed, &c. we are fully convinced that the time is hastening on, when the Jews shall be thus restored to their native kingdom.

The formation of the Jewish Sanhedrim, at Paris, a Missionary Society, Bible Society, and London Society for the conversion of the Jews (which last has sent out several Jewish Missionaries), are remarkable signs of the times. How prophetic were the words of Balaam, "From the top

of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." How signally, and how remarkably has this prediction, spoken upwards of three thousand years ago, been accomplished from that day to this. But since the commencement of the Christian era, its fulfilment has been much more remarkable than in the earlier periods of the Jewish history; and yet, even now, we know little of the extent to which it has been verified, compared with what will appear, when not only the dispersed Jews (who are known to be such,) shall be gathered together, but when the ten tribes also shall be emerged from the recess in which they have been hid during so many ages. After foretelling the singular preservation of the Israelites as a distinct people, Balaam next predicts their *permanent* felicity and final exaltation, as secured by the power and faithfulness of Jehovah. "God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent."

Daniel uses this plea in his prayer for Israel, "O my God, it is thy city, they are thy people, and they are called by thy name:" putting God in remembrance of the covenant relationship which still existed. "Hath God cast away his people?" says the apostle, "God forbid. There is, even at this present time, a remnant according to the election of grace; and so Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." And why do not our hearts burn within us, when we think of the consequences of the in-gathering of Israel, that their restoration is to be the glory of nations, and introductory to the fullness of the Gentiles.

Doddridge, Gill, Bicheno, Edwards, Winchester, and Wrangham, are of opinion, that the Jews shall be restored to the land of Palestine. Winchester suggests, that the large rivers in America are all on the eastern side, that the Jews may waft themselves the more easily down to the

Atlantic, and then across the vast ocean to the Holy Land; that Christ will appear at the equinoxes (either March or September) when the days and nights are equal all over the globe; and, finally, that the body of Christ will be luminous, and suspended in the air, over the equator, for twenty-four hours, and will be seen with circumstances of peculiar glory, from pole to pole, by all the inhabitants of the world. How far these views may accord with scripture, I leave the reader to determine for himself. Basnage says it is impossible to say what is the precise number of the Jews, but we have reason to believe there are near three millions in the different nations of the world, who profess this religion, and, as their phrase is, are witnesses of the unity of God.

Let the attentive reader consult the xxviiith chapter of Deuteronomy particularly, and let me also address an argument to the deist:—You demand ocular proof of prophecy. It is accomplished before you in an instance without parallel. It was foretold both in the Old and New Testament, that for the rejection and murder of the Messiah, the Jews should be dispersed into all countries; and yet they should not be swallowed up and lost among their conquerors, but should still subsist to latest times, a distinct people. By Jeremiah, God declared he would make an end of the nations their oppressors, but not of them. (chap. xxx. 11.) You will not say this prediction has been written since the event. Yet so it is, the mighty monarchies of Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome, are vanished like the shadows of the evening, their places know them no more; nothing remains of them but their names; while this little contemptible people you style the Jews, strangely secure without an earthly potentate or protector, amidst the wreck of empires, oppressed and persecuted,*

* Josephus says, "If the misfortunes of all from the beginning of the world, were compared with those of the Jews,

harrassed always by edicts and executions, by murders and massacres, and yet hath outlived the ruins of them all.

they would appear much inferior on the comparison." To evince the truth of this remark, I shall subjoin a list of the unhappy Jews that perished in Judea and the neighbouring countries, as collected by Lipsius and others, from various parts of Josephus's history:—

At Jerusalem, by Florus' orders	3,600
By the inhabitants of Cesarea	20,000
At Scythopolis, in Syria	13,000
At Ascalon	2,500
At Ptolomais	2,000
At Alexandria	50,000
At Damascus	10,000
At the taking of Joppa, by Cestius Gallus	8,400
In the mountain of Asamon	2,000
In a fight at Ascalon	10,000
In an ambush	8,000
At Japha	15,000
Upon Mount Gerizzim	11,000
At Joppa, when taken by Vespasian	4,200
Slain at Tarichea	7,700
Slain, or killed themselves at Gamala	9,000
Killed in their flight from Gischala	6,000
At the siege of Jotapa	40,000
Of the Gadarenes (besides numbers drowned)	15,000
In the villages of Idumea	10,000
At Gerasa	1,000
At Machaerus	1,700
Slew themselves at Massada	960
In the desert of Jardes	3,000
In Cyrene, by the Governor Catullus	3,000
In Jerusalem, during the siege	1,100,000
Total	1,357,060

Add to these 97,000 prisoners doomed to slavery, besides

Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe. Behold then a sign and a wonder, the accomplishment of prophecy in a standing miracle.—The bush of Moses, surrounded by flames, ever burning, and not consumed. Contemplate the sight as it deserves, for it is the Lord's doing, and is marvellous in our eyes.

We might direct the reader's attention to the Turkish empire, which has been declining for more than a century, and is now fast hastening to its downfall, to make room for the restoration of Israel to his own land. We might notice the amended condition of this extraordinary people; scattered over the face of the earth for more than seven-

11,000 starved to death through neglect or otherwise, and an innumerable multitude which perished in woods, caves, deserts, &c., of whom no computation could be made. I would here observe the Jews' rejection of Christ was wisely ordered of God; it fulfilled the ancient prophecies; it demonstrated that the report of Jesus' messiahship was far from being supported by carnal influence: and by this means the Jews became a standing monument of the TRUTH, amidst almost every nation under heaven. When we read the account of the dreadful massacres of the Jews, and their continued oppressions and persecutions, may we not say, the high priest's curse has been literally fulfilled on the Jewish nation:—*His blood be upon us and our children.* I must here remark, that Lord Chesterfield once told Lady Fanny Shirley, in a serious discourse they had on the evidences of Christianity, that there was one which he thought to be invincible, and not to be got over by the wit of man;—namely, the present state of the Jews: a fact to be accounted for on no human principle. This anecdote is recorded by Bishop Horne.

There is scarcely any fact in existence that can tend more powerfully to prove the authenticity of the scriptures, than the phenomenon which the Jews exhibit. Their characteristic obstinacy so long foreseen and so clearly foretold, continues to make a constant appeal to our senses.

teen centuries, and yet not melted down and lost; not made a full end of, like other nations. This amended condition seems to intimate that the anger of God is turning away from them, and that his mercy is about to visit them, according to his promise. All these facts and circumstances taken into consideration, form a strong foundation on which to rest the conclusion I contend for, and wish to impress on the readers; namely, that the shaking of nations, which is immediately to precede the coming of our Lord, is probably very near, if not already begun.

The reader who wishes to make up his mind on this subject, will do well to turn to the following passages:—Gen xvii. 1, 8; Deut. xxx. 1, 10, 32, 43; Isaiah, iv. 2, vi. 13, xi. 11, 16, xii. 1, 6, xxiv. 23, xxv. 1, 12, xxvii. 6, 12, 13, xl. 9, 11, xliii. 1, 7, xlv. 17, xlix, 6, 26, li. 1, 11, 22, lii. 1, 3, 7, liv. 1, 17, lix. 20, 21, lx. 61, 62, lxiii. 7, 19, lxv. 66; Jer. iii. 12, 25, xxiii. 3, 8, xxx. 1, 8, 22, xxxi. 1, 17, 21, 23, 24, 27, 35, 36, 37, xxxii. 39, 40, xxxiii. 1, 7, 19, 26, xxxvi. 40, xlvi. 27, 28; Ezek. xx. 33, 34, xxviii. 24, 26, xxx. 20, 31, xxxiv. 28, 29, xxxvi. 1, 38, xxxvii. 1, 23, 25, 27, xxxix. 25, 29, xli. to the end of the book; Hosea, i. 1, 11: Joel, ii. 21, 32; Amos, ix. 14, 15; Obadiah, 6, 7,; Micah, vii. 14, 15; Zech. viii. 7, 15, x. 5, 12, xii., xiv. 8; Rom. xi. 36; 2 Cor. iii. 16. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.—And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, which

shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt. And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, he also has become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." Isaiah, xi. 11, 12, 13, 16, and xii.

The evidences of the truth of Christianity are manifest in the dispersion and present state of the Jews, and are not to be controverted; but as Abraham said to the rich man in the parable, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one arose from the dead." It cannot be denied that the Jews are a striking proof of the actual and visible accomplishment of prophecy. Their appearance, language, countenance, manners, and every thing respecting them, shew them to be a PECULIAR PEOPLE: and they have ever been distinguished for their peculiarities. This fact is not to be accounted for on any human principle. When Christ assumed his public character, and after his resurrection, many of the Jews believed on him, and these were chiefly of the poorer sort: but the greater part, offended at the spirtual nature of his office, his pure and self-debasing doctrine, his mean appearance and sorry retinue, reproached, and persecuted, and betrayed him. He was crucified as a noted malefactor by the Jews, who with a loud acclamation requested HIS BLOOD *might be* UPON *them and* THEIR CHILDREN; which has been literally fulfilled on them as a nation. St.

Paul assures us all Israel are not cast off: how beautifully he exclaims, "O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God: how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." The Messiah's rejection ended in the dispersion of the Jews. "Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a bye-word, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee." (Deut. xxviii. 37.) Our Lord, addressing the daughters of Jerusalem, and viewing the distresses that were to come upon them, says, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and *your children*." Let the believer in Jesus consider with reverence, that because of unbelief they were broken off. And as St. Paul saith, "Thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity: but towards thee, goodness." Rom. xi. 20, 22.

It is a mortifying truth, that the Jews have been treated by Mahometans and Pagans far better than by Christians. It becomes us to manifest a far different spirit towards them. We are not to view them with rancourous hostility, nor emotions of hatred, but rather of pity. Far otherwise is the disposition inculcated in the gospel of Christ. They are our elder brethren; and through them came the oracles of God. The recollection of this should inspire us with tenderness and humanity.

The evangelical prophet, Isaiah, in chap. xxviii. tells us, "It shall come to pass in that day, that the *great trumpet* (the sound of the gospel) shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish, in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount of Jerusalem." It is plain the word of God pledges, that in the Jews there shall be a more ample accomplishment of the prophecies concerning them, in their re-establishment in their own land; then shall that

promise be fulfilled in turning the captivity of Judah. Every appearance at this moment shows the probability of the fall of the Turkish empire to be near; which is thought by some of the learned to be meant by the drying up of the river Euphrates, in order to make way for the return of God's Israel to their own land. The frown of the politic Russian emperor (Nicholas) puts the whole Turkish court in confusion, for they (the Turks) believe they shall fall by a great northern people. This is a common prediction among them. The instruments God employs may be unworthy and impious characters, yet the Lord uses them for his own wise purposes, as he did Cyrus, who was made an instrument in the hand of God to execute his righteous judgments. He gave nations before him, and made him rule over kings, that Babylon might sit in the dust, and captive Israel go free. The reader is referred to Rollin's Belles Lettres, where he will find a most interesting view of the prophecies concerning Cyrus. What was our Henry VIII. who began the Reformation? A monster. What were his motives? The gratification of his lusts. When the period arrives for the Lord to go forth into spiritual Egypt, it is not likely the meek of the earth will be the instruments of destruction.

Some unknown author says on this subject, "My eye, I confess, rests with peculiar pleasure upon that part of the missionary field which embraces the dispersed of Israel and Judah. I hail with no common satisfaction the attention which is now directed to their awful condition, and the efforts which are making to awaken the Christian world to a sense of this part of their duty, the bounden duty of pitying the spiritual destitution of the Jew, and pointing him to that gracious Saviour who prayed for his very murderers; and among his last directions to his apostles, commanded that remission of sins should be preached unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. The conversion of a single soul is a glorious event; it manifests the *glory*

of the grace of God; it fills heaven with joy and praise; it brings heaven down into the soul; God himself is there. But when the Lord shall build up Zion, a nation shall be born in a day, an innumerable multitude shall arise, and every heart and mouth be filled with God's praise. (Isaiah, xxxv. 10.) This, therefore, must be an event which will exceed in glory; this, however, is not all: the glory of the event will be in proportion to the previous wretched and hopeless condition of the subjects of it. Look then at the unconverted Jew, the very name of Christian is with him an object of derision and scorn. "The dry bones" in Ezekiel's vision are the emblem of the house of Israel. Well may it be asked, Can these dry bones live?—Let God himself answer. (Ezek. xxxvii. 11, 14.) Surely according to this time, it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought. (Numb. xxiii. 23.) It will be a glorious event as to the mercy and faithfulness of God; then it will indeed appear that his mercy is everlasting, that he keepeth covenant for ever. How sweet is the anticipation! The promised fruits of God's unchanged love. But how transcendantly rich will be the enjoyment! We cannot now appreciate that strength of conviction, with which it will then be acknowledged, that God is plenteous in goodness and truth, the Lord shall appear in his glory. In the 45th psalm we have a most striking description of it, under the emblem of a marriage; and in truth, the most laboured and highly wrought illustration would convey no adequate idea of the glory of that day, which shall visibly invest our King Messiah; when, as the Lord of Hosts, he shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously: but the restoration of Israel will be glorious in the manner of it, as it respects the instruments to be employed in effecting it. She who has been trodden down by the Gentiles, by the Gentiles shall be lifted up again. Those who led her away captive, shall be made to pity her. Thus saith Jehovah,

speaking to Zion, in the prophet Isaiah—"Behold I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." (Isaiah, xlix. 22.) Its consequences form the feature which exceeds in glory. This it is, which, above every other consideration, makes it the glory of nations. It will be introductory to the fulness of the Gentiles. It will bring in the glories of the millennium. Then shall they say, we have indeed found him, of whom Moses, in the law, and the prophets did write; adding, that the same Lord is rich in mercy unto all that call upon him. Thus the Lord shall be King over all the earth; and in that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, *Holiness* unto the Lord. There shall be no Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts.

One word in conclusion, to you, Gentiles, that believe. Remember that Israel, after the flesh, is a type of all the Israel of God. You, like them, may be suffering under desertion. You may think God has forgotten to be gracious, but he doth not cast off for ever. His eye is upon his prepared habitation; and every converted soul is the habitation of God through the spirit. O trust then in the name of the Lord, and stay upon your God. Yours are all the promises; even those which, in their primary and literal import, are addressed to the natural Israel, in their spiritual signification extended to the whole Church of God.

CHAP. VII.

FIRST: ON THE EVE OF THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM.—SECOND: ALL DENOMINATIONS CONSENTING TO THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST; THE LION AND THE LAMB FEEDING TOGETHER.—THIRD: THE INGATHERING OF THE ISRAELITES, THE TIME PREDICTED BY ALL THE PROPHETS.—FOURTH: THE ISRAELITES POSSESSING THE HOLY LAND, WILL SHOW A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES.

DEARLY beloved brethren, believers of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,—ye ministers of the sanctuary, heralds commissioned from above,—lift every one his voice like a trumpet, and loudly proclaim the Redeemer to every sect and denomination; get ye up, ye ambassadors of peace, get ye up into the high mountains, and spread far and wide, to every people, the honors of the Lamb. Gather together into one fold the sheep of every kindred, tongue, and people; unite yourselves in one fellowship and union with the brethren of different churches. Teach every sacred roof to resound with his fame, every human heart to glow with his love. Declare to every people, as far as the force of words will go, declare the inexhaustible fulness of that great atonement whose merits are commensurated with the glories of the divinity. Tell the sinful wretches that pity yearns in Immanuel's bowels. What blood he has spilt, what agonies he hath endured, what wonders he hath wrought for the salvation of his enemies! Invite the indigent to become rich, intreat the guilty to accept pardon; while you are placed in this conspicuous station, cause an ingathering of the people, that love may glow with joyful sound in every heart, as it

is written in St. John's Gospel (x. 16), "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." In the same gospel, our Lord shews plainly the ingathering of his people, and the other sheep are such that are wandering from his fold, and may be deemed hirelings, because they are led about by the prejudice of the world, and not awake from their lethargy. A certain degree of pride in the ministry has done no little injury to professing Christians; and until a union of love is created in the shepherd's breast, the sheep may mix with hirelings, and Christ's kingdom will be neglected. Ye ministers of the sanctuary, heralds commissioned from above, unite yourselves in fellowship one to another, so that the kingdom of Christ may become one common cause through the British dominions. It might be asked by sceptics, would protestant ministers go hand in hand with Wesleyans? *Yes, the faith is the same*, and all things are the same, only one is educated at Oxford, the other receives his commission gradually. Yet I am happy to live in the day when the kingdom of this world is fast becoming the kingdom of our Lord. A great union has already taken place in some parts of this kingdom; two great shining lights have appeared in Liverpool ready to relieve each other's pulpit. A similar spirit has manifested itself in Derby, Lincoln, and Sheffield. Would to God this may spread throughout his Majesty's dominions both at home and abroad. Ministers of the sanctuary, heralds commissioned from above, covenant amongst yourselves BY ONE GENERAL MEETING, and cause good feelings, that an union of love might be generated and a fire kindled, with a zeal for the ingathering of the people; so that the language of every pulpit may create new love one for another. Providence points out to us at this time the glorious privilege. His late most gracious Majesty King George the Fourth gave every sanction for this increasing

love. More has been done in that monarch's days than in other centuries since the days of the apostles. His present Majesty is still more friendly to this blessed object. To unite all sects and denominations, each must give way agreeably to the holy Scripture, viz. Protestants have already given in the creed of St. Athanasius; this is a great condescension, and is approaching near the word of God. Antinomians must give in their high doctrines of predestination, *not to say, that by the will of God* any man or woman is born to be lost. Independents must admit into fellowship, invite their hearers, particularly them of the lower class, as many of them are found great ornaments of the gospel of Christ. Wesleyans, keep themselves within bounds, lest any should fall away; a close enquiry after their private characters, when regenerated; and let the pastors of their church reprove them if not found faithful to their engagements, both in worldly and spiritual things. Catholics who should be nearest to the Protestant Church, should give way to the resolutions and desires of the councils of Frankfort and Paris, against the worship of images, which had still some force and influence in Germany, in France, in England, and other countries. In the former part of this century, in the year 909, a council was held at Trosley, a village near Soissons, in France; and having made several wise and good regulations, they concluded with a profession of the things which Christians ought to believe and practice; and in that profession are none of those things which constitute the sum of popish doctrine, nothing about the Pope's being head of the church, nothing of the daily sacrifice of the mass, or of purgatory, or of the worship of creatures, or of commentitious sacraments, or of confession to the priest, but of pure and sincere confession to God. So much did this council differ from the spirit and principles of the council of Trent. Many churches still retained the use of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue; and in England particularly, Athelstan "caused them

to be translated into the Anglo-Saxon idiom." Great opposition was also made in several countries to the celibacy of the clergy; and several councils were held upon the controversy between the monks and the secular clergy, and particularly in England, where Elfere, Earl of Mercia, expelled the monks out of the monasteries in that province, and introduced the clergy with their wives. Many too, even in this age, denied the doctrine of transubstantiation. Heriger, abbot of Lobes, near Liege, wrote expressly against it; as did also Alfric, in England, whose homily for Easter used to be read publicly in the churches. His principal aim therein is to prove, "that we spiritually taste the body of Christ and drink his blood, when with true faith we partake of that holy sacrament;" the bread and wine cannot by any benediction be changed into the body and blood of Christ,—they are indeed the body and blood of Christ, yet not corporeally, but spiritually.

A general union of churches is now about to take place; this great change is on the eve, the signs of the times are began, and greater signs will hereafter shortly take place in the heavens.* We are now on the eve of the millen-

* The York Herald says, "A person has called at our office, who relates some curious appearances, which he says he (in company with several others) witnessed in the moon on their way from Leeds to this city, on Thursday week. When they came near Halton Bar, about eleven o'clock, the moon had just risen above the horizon, and was shining serenely on the atmosphere; as the party were remarking to each other on the fineness of the night, the moon seemed to part in two, its disc separating down the centre, and leaving an apparent space of about a yard between the two hemispheres, in which the distance and deep azure of the sky was visible. Whilst in this state, from the northern limb of the lunar orb, a bright appearance darted forth in form like the head of a spear, and sur-

nium. With respect to Jews and Unitarians, I shall hereafter prove the ingathering and convincing of those wanderers, in the following chapter, viz. Rev. xxi.

"1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

"2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

"3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

"4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.

"5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful.

"6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: I will give unto

rounded with brilliant stars. On a sudden it withdrew, and in its place appeared the distinct form of two human figures, which were visible to the waist, and one arm and the hand of one of them seemed to be extended on the surface of that half of the disc from which it emerged; a deep-red girdle was round the head of one of them. The appearance remained for some time, when a cloud obscured the moon altogether from view. On its having passed away, the same appearance was renewed, and our informant states that the whole time during which he had an uninterrupted view of these strange phenomenon was above an hour, and that he and those that were with him were greatly amazed at the wonderful appearance."—Seen August 30, 1829.

him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

" 7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

" 8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

" A new heaven and a new earth," (ver. 1) succeeded in the room of " the first heaven and the first earth," which " passed away " (xx. 11.) at the general judgment. In the new earth there is this remarkable property, that " there is no more sea," which, whether it shall be effected by the means which the theorists of the earth have prescribed, or by any other, time must discover ; but it is evident from hence, that this new heaven and earth are not designed to take place till after the general judgment, for at the general judgment (xx. 13) " the sea gave up the dead which were in it." Many understand the expression figuratively, that there shall be " no troubles or commotions" in this new world. In this new world, too, " the new Jerusalem" appears (ver. 2) in full glory and splendour. It is described as " coming down from God out of heaven," it is a city whose maker and builder is God, and is " adorned as bride of the Lamb," the true church of Christ; and the new Jerusalem, the true church of Christ, subsists as well during the millennial kingdom as after it. At the commencement of the millennium it is said, (xix. 7) " The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." At the conclusion of the millennium, Gog and Magog went up (xx. 9) against " the beloved city ;" and here it is represented as the metropolis of the new heaven and the new earth. The new Jerusalem shall be the habitation of the saints of the first resurrection, and it shall also be the habitation of the saints

of the general resurrection. The church of Christ shall endure through all times and changes in this world, and likewise in the world to come; it shall be glorious upon earth during the millennium, and it shall be more glorious still in the new earth, after the millennium to all eternity. Earth shall then become as heaven, or rather, it shall be a heaven upon earth, (ver. 3) God dwelling visibly among men; and (ver. 4) "there shall be no more death," which cannot come to pass till death shall be totally abolished (xx. 14) by being "cast into the lake of fire," and till the "former things," the first heaven and the first earth "are passed away." He "who sat upon the throne" as judge of the world (xx. 11) declares, (ver. 5) "Behold I make all things new." He is the author of this second, as well as of the first creation, and he commands these things to be "written" for the edification and consolation of his church, with a firm assurance of their truth and certainty. He pronounces this period (ver. 6—8) to be "the consummation" of all things, when the promises of God, and the desires of his faithful servants, shall all be fully accomplished; the righteous "shall inherit all things," but the profligate and immoral "shall have their portion in the lake of fire and brimstone," which is a farther demonstration that these things cannot take effect till after the general judgment.

Many, I know, both ancients and moderns, make the millennium synchronize with the new heaven and the new earth, and some latitude of interpretation may be well allowed in these mysterious points of futurity: but this order of things, and this interpretation of the words appear to me most natural and most agreeable to the context. Gog and Magog, the nations in the four corners of the earth, are deceived by Satan after the expiration of the millenium; but Gog and Magog are not inhabiters of the new heaven and the new earth. It is not our business to frame theories and invent hypotheses, but faithfully to

follow the word of God as our surest guide, without regarding much the authority of men. Not but various authorities might be cited to show that this is no novel opinion; as St. Barnabas says, "When the Lord shall make all things new, then shall be the beginning of the eighth day, which is the beginning of another world;"* allowing six thousand years to the duration of this world, the seventh thousand to be the millennium, and the eighth thousand to the beginning of a blessed eternity; and you may find many more testimonies alleged to this purpose in the notes of Cotelerius, and other critics upon this passage of St. Barnabas. Lactantius affirms, that "when the thousand years shall be completed, the world shall be renewed by God, and the heaven shall be folded up, and the earth shall be changed; and God shall transform men into the similitude of angels, and they shall be as white as snow, and shall be always conversant in the sight of the Almighty, and shall sacrifice to their Lord, and serve him for ever."† St. Austin also declares, that "the judgment being finished, then this heaven and this earth shall cease to be, and the new heaven and the new earth shall begin to be; for by a mutation of things this world will pass away, not by an utter extinction." Whence also the apostle says, (1 Cor. vii. 31) that "the fashion of this

* Γεγόνοτων δὲ καινῶν πάντων ὑπὸ Κύριου, ἀρχὴν ἡμέρας ὀγδόης, ὅ ἐστὶν ἄλλου κόσμου ἀρχήν.

Novatis vero cunctis a Domino, octavi diei initium, hoc est initium alterius mundi. Sancti Barnab. Epist. cap. 15; vide etiam notas Cotelerii, &c.

† **Cum verò completi fuerint mille anni, renovabitur mundus a Deo, et cœlum complectabitur et terra mutabitur; et transformabit Deus homines in similitudinem angelorum: et erunt candidi, sicut nix: et versabantur semper in conspectu omnipotentis, et Domino suo sacrificabunt, et servient in æternum. Lactant. lib. 7, cap. 26.**

world passeth away."* And indeed why should the new heaven and the new earth be destroyed, when there shall be no more sin, when there shall be no more curse, "when there shall be no more death?" The heaven and the earth of old, (2 Pet. iii. 5—7) for the wickedness of man, perished by water; "the heavens and the earth which are now, are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men:" but why should not "the new heaven and the new earth" be preserved, "wherein dwelleth righteousness?"

"9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

"10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

"11 Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal;

"12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.

"13 On the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates.

"14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

* Peracto quippe judicio tunc esse desinet hoc cœlum et hæc terra, quando incipiet esse cœlum novum et terra nova. Mutatione namque rerum, non omni modo interitu, transibit hic mundus. Unde et Apostolus ait, "Præterit enim figura hujus mundi." S. Augustin. de civitate Dei, lib. 19, cap. 14, p. 449, tom. 7, edit. Benedict. Antwerp.

" 15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

" 16 And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal.

" 17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

" 18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

" 19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second sapphire; the third a chalcedony; the fourth an emerald;

" 20 The fifth sardonyx; the sixth sardius; the seventh chrysolite; the eighth beryl; the ninth a topaz; the tenth a chrysoprasus; the eleventh a jacinth; the twelfth an amethyst.

" 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

" 22 And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

" 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

" 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

" 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there.

" 26 And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.

" 27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing

that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

A more particular description is afterward given of the new Jerusalem. "One of the seven angels who had the seven vials," (xvii. 1) and most probably the same angel who had shewed to St. John (xviii. 1—16) the mystic Babylon and her destruction, now sheweth, by way of contrast, the new Jerusalem and her glory. For this purpose (ver. 10) he carried him away in the spirit to "a great and high mountain;" in the same manner as Ezekiel was "brought in the visions of God, and set upon a very high mountain," (Ez. xl. 2) to see the frame of the city and temple: and this description of the "new Jerusalem is an assemblage of the sublimest, richest imagery of Ezekiel and other ancient prophets. "The glory of God," or the divine Shechinah, (ver. 11) illuminates the city. It hath (ver. 12—14) "a wall great and high," to shew its strength and security; and "twelve gates," with angels for guards,—"three on the east, three on the north, three on the south, and three on the west," to shew that people of all climates and nations may have access to it. On "the twelve gates" are written "the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel," as in "the twelve foundations" are inscribed "the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb," to signify that the Jewish and the Christian church are now united, and (Eph. ii. 20) "built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." The angel hath (ver. 15—17) a measuring reed, as the angel had likewise in Ezekiel xl. 3, and the measures of the city and of the walls are formed by the multiplication of "twelve," the number of the apostles. The city lieth four-square, the length as large as the breadth, according to the pattern of Jerusalem in Ezekiel xlviii. 16; and "the length, and breadth, and height" of the walls and buildings are every

where of the same beauty, strength, and proportion. It is "built and garnished with gold, and all manner of precious stones," (ver. 18—21) as the richest emblem of eastern wealth and magnificence; the stones resembling those in Aaron's breast-plate, to denote that the "Urim and Thummim," the "light and perfection" of God's oracle are there. It hath one remarkable peculiarity, (ver. 22) that there is "no temple therein," for the whole is the temple of God and of the Lamb. The glory of God and the Lamb shine in it (ver. 23) with a lustre superior to the sun and moon. All they "who are saved" (ver. 24—27) "walk" continually "in the light of it," for "the gates are never shut," and "no night is there;" it is the centre of "glory and honor;" all the wicked are excluded, and only good Christians are admitted, "they who are written in the Lamb's book of life."

At the present time we are living under "the sixth trumpet," and "the second woe" (Rev. xi.); the Othman empire is still subsisting, the beast is still reigning, and there are Protestant witnesses still prophesying in sackcloth: and this "sixth trumpet" and "second woe" must end before the "seventh trumpet" can sound, or the third woe be poured out, which is to fall upon the kingdom of the beast. But before the end of "the second woe," it should seem that the papists will make a great and successful effort against the Protestant religion. When the witnesses "shall have near finished their testimony," that is, towards the conclusion of these 1260 years, "the beast shall make war against them, and shall overcome them." They shall be oppressed and "dead," as it were, to the great joy and triumph of their enemies; but they shall "rise again after three years and a half," and the Protestant religion shall become more glorious than ever, with a considerable diminution of the papal authority. According to the method and order wherein St. John hath arranged these events, they must happen before the end of

"the second woe," or the fall of the Othman empire. Ezekiel xxxviii, xxxix, and Daniel xi. 44, 45, have given some intimations that the Othman empire shall be overthrown in opposing the settlement of Israel in their own land in the latter days. In the conclusion of the book of Daniel there are also some intimations, that the religion of Mohammed shall prevail in the East, for as long a period of time as the tyranny of the little horn in the West. Very remarkable too it is, that Mohammed first contrived his imposture in the year 606,* the very same year wherein the tyrant Phocas made a grant of the supremacy to the Pope; and this might incline one to think that the 1260 years of the reign of Antichrist are to be dated from this time. But though they might rise together, yet they were not fully established together. The authority of Mohammed might be fully established in the seventh century, but that of the Pope was not so till the eighth century; and therefore, as the one was established somewhat sooner, so it may also be subverted somewhat sooner than the other. The Pope indeed was established "supreme" in spirituals in the seventh century, but he became not a temporal "horn," or "beast," till the eighth century. When the Othman empire is overthrown and "the second woe is past," then, according to St. John xi. 14, "the third woe cometh quickly," which comprehends all the severe and terrible judgments of God upon the kingdom of the beast. In like manner, when Daniel hath predicted the fall of "the King of the North," or of the Othman empire, he subjoins immediately, (xii. 1) that "then shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book;" agreeably to which St. John also saith, (xx. 15) "that whosoever was not found written in

* See Prideaux's Life of Mohammed.

the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." The 1260 years of the reign of the beast, I suppose, and with the 1260 years of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and now the destined time is come for the judgments of God to overtake him; for as he might exist before the 1260 years began, so he may exist likewise after they are finished, in order to be made an eminent example of divine justice. For the greater confirmation and illustration of this subject, and to make the stronger impression upon the minds of the readers, these judgments are displayed under a variety of figures and representations. First they are described in a more general manner, (Rev. xiv.) as "the harvest and reaping of the earth," and as "the vintage and wine-press of the wrath of God;" then they are represented in a more particular manner, (Rev. xv, xvi.) as "the seven vials," or "the seven last plagues," for in them is filled up the wrath of God, which are so many signal judgments on the kingdom of the beast, and so many steps and degrees to his ruin. Afterwards the fall of Rome is delineated (Rev. xvii, xviii) as of another Babylon, and it is declared that she will be destroyed by fire, and her destruction shall be a total and complete destruction, such as hath never yet been the fate of Rome. Some of the princes, who were once of her communion, "shall hate" her as much as they loved her, "and burn her with fire." It is further intimated that she shall be swallowed up by a subterraneous fire, shall sink "like a great millstone in the sea," and "her smoke shall rise up for ever and ever;" and the soil and situation of Rome and neighbouring countries, greatly favors such a supposition. As St. John saith, (xi. 8) "she spiritually is like Sodom," and she shall resemble Sodom in her punishment, as well as in her crimes. After the subversion of the capital city, (Rev. xix.) "the beast and the false prophet," the powers civil and ecclesiastical, with those who still adhere to their party, shall make one effort more; but it shall prove as

weak and vain as it is impious: they shall both be taken, and cast alive into a lake of fire "burning with brimstone." The destruction of Antichrist, therefore, of himself, as well as his seat, shall be in a terrible manner "by fire." Daniel asserts the same thing, (vii. 11) "I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." So likewise saith St. Paul, (2 Thess. i. 7, 8.) "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and again more particularly, (ii. 8.) "Then shall that wicked" one, the man of sin, "be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." About the time of the fall of the Othman empire and of the Christian Antichrist, the Jews shall turn to the Lord, and be restored to their own land. Innumerable are the prophecies concerning the conversion and restoration of this people. Hear only what Hosea saith, who prophecied before the captivity of the ten tribes of Israel, (iii. 4, 5.) "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image," or altar, "and without an ephod, and without teraphim," or divine manifestations: "afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." Hear also what Ezekiel saith, who prophecied during the captivity of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, (xxxvii. 21, 25.) "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have

dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever; and my servant David shall be their prince for ever." (Ezekiel xxxix. 28, 29.) "Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, who caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen; but I have gathered them into their own land, and have left none of them any more there; neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." Ye cannot but remember what St. Paul saith upon the same occasion, (Rom. xi. 25.) "I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, that blindness in part hath happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved." Now these and the like predictions we suppose will take effect, and this great revolution be accomplished about the time of the fall of the Othman empire, and of the Christian Antichrist. Ezekiel's "Gog and Magog" (xxxviii. xxxix.) we believe to be the Turks or Othmans, and "they shall come up against the children of Israel in the latter days," to oppose their resettlement in their own land, "and they shall fall" in some extraordinary manner "upon the mountains of Israel, they and the people that is with them; so the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God, from that day and forward." Daniel too, xi. 45, xii. 1, predicts the fall of the King of the North, "upon the glorious high mountain, and at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince, who standeth for the children of Israel." The restoration of the Jews, and the fall of Antichrist shall also happen about the same time. If "the sixth vial," Rev. xvi. 12, which is "poured out upon the great river Euphrates, whose waters are dried up to prepare a passage for the Kings of the East," is to be understood, as Mr. Mede and others think, of the return of the Jews, then the return of the Jews is one of the seven last plagues

of Antichrist. But this motion is expressed more clearly in Daniel, as it more immediately concerned his people. xi. 36. "He shall prosper till the indignation," that is, God's indignation against the Jews, "be accomplished:" and again afterwards, xii. 7, "When God shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." In consequence, and conformity to this doctrine, a tradition hath prevailed among the Jews, that the destruction of Rome, and the redemption of Israel shall fall out about the same time.*

When these great events shall come to pass, of which we collect from the prophecies this to be the proper order, the Protestant witnesses shall be greatly exalted, and the 1260 years of their prophesying in sackcloth, and of the tyranny of the beast, shall end together; the conversion and restoration of the Jews succeed; then follows the ruin of the Othman empire, and then the total destruction of Rome and of Antichrist.

When these great events, I say, shall come to pass, then shall the kingdom of Christ commence, or the reign of the saints upon earth. So Daniel expressly informs us, that the kingdom of Christ and the saints will be raised upon the ruins of the kingdom of Antichrist. (vii. 26, 27.) "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end; and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." So likewise St. John saith, that upon the final destruction of "the beast and the false prophet," (Rev. xx.) "Satan is bound for a thousand years: And I saw thrones, and

* See Platico Hebræorum de Babylonis seu Romæ excidio, in Mede's works, b. 5, cap. 8, p. 902.

they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years: But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." This is the first resurrection. It is, I conceive, to these great events, the fall of Antichrist, the re-establishment of the Jews, and the beginning of the glorious millennium, that the three different dates in Daniel, of 1260 years, 1290 years, and 1335 years are to be referred. And as Daniel saith (xii. 12) "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 years;" so St. John saith (xx. 6) "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Blessed and happy indeed will be this period: and it is very observable, that the martyrs and confessors of Jesus, in Popish as well as in Pagan times, will be raised to partake of this felicity. Then shall all those gracious promises in the Old Testament be fulfilled, of the amplitude and extent, of the peace and prosperity, of the glory and happiness of the church in the latter days. Then, in the full sense of the words (Rev. xi. 15) "shall the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." According to tradition, these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the saints will be the seventh millennary of the world,* for as God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh, so the world, it is argued, will continue six thousand years, and the seventh thousand will be the great "Sabbatism," or holy rest to the people of God: one day being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (2 Pet. iii. 8.) According to tradition too, these thousand years of the reign of

* See Burnett's Theory, b. 3, ch. 5; b. 4, ch. 6.

Christ and the saints, are "the great day of judgment;"* in the morning or beginning whereof shall be the coming of Christ in flaming fire, and the particular judgment of antichrist, and the first resurrection; and in the evening or conclusion whereof shall be the general resurrection of the dead, "small and great, and, "they shall be judged every man according to his works."

Beloved brethren, be not ignorant of the true church of Christ, be not over satisfied to say your church is the right church. A church does not consist of wood and stone, a name, a form of worship; but this is the true church, the new Jerusalem; not that church which is built in our day so called, but truly consists of an edifice, constructed by God through Jesus Christ, our mediator between God and man. This true church is not built with hands, nor constructed either by Catholics, Independents, or Protestants; neither by Jews, Unitarians, nor Mahometans; yet a number of the first three denominations might truly be of that new church. But, be not deceived, my brethren, nothing can be true that does not come from the Father of lights; nothing can be true that is not sanctified and vivified by the Holy Spirit; nothing can be true, except your whole heart, mind, and soul is given to Christ, as an equivalent for his purchase. Whosoever is of this church, is the servant of the Most High God; and upon this rock, Christ said to Peter, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. But recollect, my reader, except thou hast come out from the world, thou hast no interest in this new church; thou hast no interest even if thy minister is of that true church, and thou art of the world, and feelest not the vivifying influence of the Holy Spirit. We are now on the eve of the millennium, when Abraham's seed will acknowledge Christ as their Re-

* See Placita Hebræorum doctorum de magno die judicii in Mede, p. 535, b. 5, ch. 3, p. 892.

deemer, and the seed of Abraham will show a light to the Gentiles; this light will be the true light, the new Jerusalem come down from God. This edifice is not to be constructed of wood and stone, but the old man made new, and vivified with the love of Christ. Christ will reign in the heart of every true Christian; and they that wear the professor's garb, or are called sabbath-worshippers, sitting six days in the scorner's chair, will hide their faces with confusion and shame, and no man will have confidence in their word. Lamentable is the case in our day, that the worship of our great Creator and Preserver is banished from a many of the most conspicuous families. It is not only deemed a piece of rude impertinence to mention the gracious Redeemer in a many of our genteel interviews, but also to ridicule the mysteries of Christianity as a species of refined conversation; they taint the air with lascivious hints, and sin with a high hand. Many of those who wear the professor's garb are destitute of the power, and content themselves with a mere form of godliness. So near is the blessed time of the millennium now spoken of in this chapter, that some of our children now living, may partake of the first rays of its light, yet may not see the meridian in all its splendour and glory. My dear friends, ye that have nursed up children, educated and pampered them at a finishing school, with a species of refined conversation, that even taints the air with lascivious hints, how will such mothers and fathers shrink in their old age to pity their children, and grieve for having given way to the fashions of the world; its allurements are devilish, and all its value will not purchase you a possession in the millennium of Christ's kingdom. It may be asked, when this will take place, and with what authority I now treat so fully on this important subject. In reading over the prophecies of Isaiah, Daniel, Revelations, and our blessed Saviour's prophecy, recorded in the third chapter of this work, I find that in speaking of the signs of the heavens and

the times, the calculation of time in the holy scriptures represents the present times. Some part has already made its appearance, and in succession will even baffle the philosophers of modern times; and unless the present signs of the heavens are spiritualized, as in gospel age, no one will be able to discern the truth. Philosophers in this our day, have already disagreed with respect to the nature and substance of a comet that is about to appear; one represents the substance to be fire, another water, but *I have reason to suppose it is neither.* Fire might be a sign of the dissolution and purifying of the earth, but that time is not yet at hand. Water might be a sign to sweep away the nations gathered together; but we have a sign fixed in the heavens, a promise from God, that water shall no more be our destruction; but a body, neither fire nor water, appears in the heavens, which denotes the ingathering of all nations, tongues, and people. When the children of Israel shall see the first token, they will prepare to possess their own glorious land; and when the fulness of the time is come, all the world will have a desire to be called by their name; and the Israelites, who have sat in darkness until now, will show a most glorious light to the Gentile nations; and the land will mourn no more, but be restored to its former state.

The Lord can save his poor dispersed people, consistent with his justice, truth, and purity; for we are very sure that he can do nothing contrary to those; but all those sweetly harmonize in the great sacrifice of an incarnate God offended, Jews and Gentiles, upon the cross. There is the centre of union between an offended Deity, and a lost world; and if he was given to be a light unto the Gentiles, he will be the glory of his people Israel.

If the Lord had not said it, we should have no right to expect it, but since he has spoken it, he will make it good. When Solomon was dedicating the temple, he prays, "If they (the Jews) sin against thee, and thou be angry with

them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives into the land of the enemy, far or near; yet if they shall bethink themselves, in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee, in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, we have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; and so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee towards the land which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name; then hear thou their prayer and their supplications in heaven, thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them that have carried them captive, that they may have compassion upon them, for they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron.*" Such was Solomon's prayer, and we find it was accepted ;† and, consequently, the answer will be granted in due time. And it is very probable, Solomon might have that promise in view (Deut. xxx. 4,) when he made that solemn prayer, and therefore pleaded it in faith.

But I do not to rest this important matter upon Solomon's prayer; I have a cloud of witnesses, very pertinent, and strong, and clear. Whatever the Psalmist might have in view, I make no doubt but the Eternal Spirit had this great event in view, when, in the name of the Jewish church, he exclaims, in the most pathetic language, "We have waited for thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple. O God, according to thy name, so is thy

* 1 Kings viii. 46, 51. † Ib. ix. 3.

praise unto the end of the world; thy right-hand is full of righteousness. Let Mount Zion rejoice, and the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy righteous judgments. Walk about Zion, go round about her; tell the towers thereof: mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.* " The last verse is a key to the whole passage.

But let us proceed to the evangelic prophet; I expect he will detain us for some time, and a sweet companion he is. After giving us a lovely description of the rod which grows from the stem of Jesse, and the verdant branch which shall spring from his root, and the charming effects of his millennial kingdom, he adds, " And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and shall gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth. And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria, like as it was unto Israel in the day that he came out of the land of Egypt.† " The twelfth chapter is then a song of praise, to the great Shepherd of Israel, who had gathered them from all countries, in the dark and cloudy day; for then they can cheerfully say, " Sing unto the Lord, for he hath done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout thou inhabitress‡ of Zion; for great is the Holy One of

* Psalm xlviii. 8, 14. † Isaiah xi. 11, to the end.

‡ The Hebrew word יושבת is in the feminine gender, to show that it is the church, yea the Jewish church, after her captivities are over, which is spoken of.

Israel, which is in the midst of thee.* " That all this joy and triumph cannot barely refer to the liberation from the captivity of Babylon, if it refers to it all, is very clear to me, because it is after the root of Jesse is lifted up as an ensign to the Gentiles, and not before; nor even the Jews brought from so many quarters of the world as is spoken of at that time; also the happy change, in the qualities and dispositions of the most savage and fierce animals, is a circumstance which will take place at the general in-gathering of the chosen race. These are to me sufficient proofs that these two charming chapters refer to the glorious reign of Immanuel here, in his millennial kingdom. But the prophet goes on, " The Lord of Hosts shall make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, &c.," he then adds, " he will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off the earth, for the Lord hath spoken it." Then comes in the triumphant language of the believing Jews, " And it shall be said in that day, lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will rejoice and be glad in his salvation.† " " In that day," the day when the vail shall be taken from the Jews, " shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; we have a strong city, salvation will he appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth, may enter in.‡ " In reference to the very same things, and time, is that animating exhortation, " Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand, double for all her sins.§ " And should it be objected, there are mountains and difficulties in the way;

* Isaiah xii. 5, 6.

† Isaiah xxv. 6, 7, 8.

‡ Isaiah xxvi. 1, 2.

§ Ib. xl. 1, 2.

it is added, " Every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the rough places plain, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."* And if the frailty and weakness of human nature should be any objection, it is confessed all flesh is grass; or should the arm of flesh attempt to oppose the designs of God, " His Spirit will blow upon it, and then the grass withereth and the flower fadeth;" but then it is neither the frailty of flesh which it depends upon, nor all the glory of flesh which can oppose it, for God hath said it, " and the word of our God shall stand for ever." Hence, with great exultation, he cries, " O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God."† Behold your incarnate God, whom you have long rejected, he still waits to be gracious to you. " Behold, the Lord will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead such as are with young." Again, how affectionately does he call, " But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend, thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away." And lest difficulties and oppositions should discourage, he adds, " Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."‡ In the same sweet strain he proceeds, " But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name;

* Isa. xl. 4, 5. † Ib. xl. 9. ‡ Ib. xli. 10.

thou art mine. Fear not, for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say unto the north, give up; and to the south, keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."* He then lovingly chides his chosen people, saying, "But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel;" nevertheless, says he, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance, let us plead together; declare thou, that thou mayest be justified."†

After mentioning the causes of their being rejected for a season, he resumes the sweet subject again, "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen, thus saith the Lord that made thee, that formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; fear not, O Jacob my servant, and thou Jeshurun whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel."‡ Thus, after showing the folly of idols, and how little satisfaction they yield, he adds, "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel, for thou art my servant; I have formed thee: thou art my servant, O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return to me for I have redeemed thee."§ Thus heaven and earth are called to join in this divine jubilee, this great return. "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it;

* Isa. xliii. 1, 5, 6. † Ib. xliii. 22—26.
‡ Isa. xliv. 1—5. § Ib. xliv. 21, 22.

shout ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."*

Again, as it is mentioned in a previous page of this chapter, that a more general account, with reference to the holy word, shewing that there shall be such a happy period as the millennium, that the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the heavens, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God. Dan. vii. 27. That Christ shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Psalm ii. 8. That the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Isa. xi. 9. The fulness of the gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved. Rom. xi. 25, 26. In a word, that the kingdom of heaven shall be established upon earth, is the plain and express doctrine of Daniel and all the prophets, as well as of St. John, in the xxii. chapter of Revelation.

"1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

"2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

"3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.

"4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

"5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God

* Isa. xliv. 23.

giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."

The first five verses of this chapter are a continuation of the description of the new Jerusalem. It is farther described with "the river of life" and "the tree of life," as if paradise was restored and improved. "A river flowing through the midst of the streets," and "trees growing on either side of the river," are wonderfully pleasing and agreeable objects, especially in the hot eastern countries. Of the fruits there is such plenty and abundance, that all may freely partake of them at all seasons; and the very "leaves are for the healing of the nations;" by all which is signified the blessedness of immortality without any infirmities. Then, too, "there shall be no more curse," as there is in this present world ever since the fall of man; but the blessed inhabitants shall enjoy the so much talked of "beatific vision," shall live in the light of God's countenance, and "serve him," and "reign for ever and ever."

"6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel, to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

"7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

In the conclusion, the angel (ver. 6, 7) ratifies and confirms all these particulars by a repetition of the same solemn assurance which he had given before (xix. 9, xx. 5.) that "these sayings are faithful and true:" and he was commissioned by the same God who had inspired the ancient prophets, "to shew the things which must shortly be done," which would very soon begin in part to be fulfilled, and in process of time would all be completed. "Behold, I come quickly," saith he; for we may observe that the angel speaketh sometimes in his own person, and sometimes in the person and character

of Christ, whose ambassador and representative he was. Christ is said to "come" upon any notable and illustrious manifestation of his providence; and all these are but so many steps to prepare the way for his last coming to judgment. A blessing too is pronounced, as in the beginning (i. 3.) upon those who "keep the sayings of the prophecy of this book," and as good Vitringa devoutly wished, "May the Lord bestow this grace and favor on us who have employed some time and pains in the study and explanation of this book, that some part of this 'blessing' also may descend to us."*

"8 And I, John, saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

"9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

"10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.

"11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

"12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

"13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

"14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

* Præstat nobis hanc gratiam Dominis, qui operam aliquam in illius meditatione collocavimus, et aliqua etiam nobis hujus "beatitatis" pars obtingat. (Translated in the text.) Vitrin. p. 909.

" 15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

" 16 I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

" 17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.

" 18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book;

" 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

" 20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

" 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

St. John (ver. 8, 9) testifieth himself to be the person who " saw and heard these things;" and in his extacy falling into the same mistake that he had committed before (xix. 10), he is gently corrected in the same manner by the angel, who ordereth him (ver. 10) " not to seal up this prophecy," as Daniel's was (xii. 4, 9), " for the time is at hand;" some of the particulars would very soon be accomplished, as indeed all would in their due season and order: which he farther enforceth (ver. 11—15) with promises and threatenings, of rewards to the righteous and of vengeance on the wicked. It was not thought sufficient to represent the angel speaking in the person of Christ, but Christ himself also is introduced (ver. 16) speaking in his own person, and confirming the

divine authority of this book, and attesting it to be properly his revelation. "The Spirit and the bride," (ver. 17) that is, "the spiritual bride," the true church of Christ therefore receives it, and ardently wisheth and prayeth for its completion. The book being of this importance and authority, a solemn adjuration is added by Christ himself, that no man may presume to add any thing to it, or take away any thing from it, (ver. 18, 19) "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book:" which ought to be seriously considered by all visionaries and enthusiasts on the one hand, who boast their own inventions as divine revelations; and by all sceptics and infidels on the other, who depreciate the value and authority of these predictions. "He who testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly," ver. 20; he not only attesteth them to be true, but will also come speedily to accomplish them; to which St. John answers, and in him the whole church, "Amen; even so, come Lord Jesus." He closeth all with the usual apostolical benediction (ver. 21), wishing "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" to the churches of Asia in particular, and to all Christians in general. The conclusion is truly excellent, as well as all other parts of this book; and nothing could be contrived to leave these things with a stronger impression upon the mind of the readers. In the whole, from the first to last, appears the majesty of the divine revealer, "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end," the author and finisher of every good work, and of this more especially.

This (as Sir Isaac Newton hath hinted, and as Doctor

Warburton hath fully proved in some discourses*) is that "sure word of prophecy, whereunto" Christians, as St. Peter saith, "do well to take heed" and attend. St. Peter (2 Pet. i. 16, &c.) is asserting and establishing the truth of Christ's second coming, in power and great glory. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty." One illustrious proof of his coming in power and glory, was his appearing in glory and majesty at his transfiguration (ver. 17, 18), "For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." His appearing once in power and great glory, is a good argument that he may appear again in like manner; and that he not only may, but will, we have the farther assurance of prophecy (ver. 19), "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." St. Peter might mean the prophecies in general which treat of the second coming of Christ, but it appears that the Revelation was principally in his thoughts and intentions. Christ's second coming in power and glory is one principal topic of the Revelation. With this it begins (i. 7), "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." With this it also concludes (xxii. 20), "He who testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly." Nothing can better answer the character of the Revelation, especially in St. Peter's time,

* Dr. Halifax contradicts him, and maintains the Revelation to be written after the death of St. Peter, in the reign of Domitian.

when as yet scarce any part of it was fulfilled, than "a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." It openeth more and more, like the dawning of the day; and the more it is fulfilled, the better it is understood. Afterwards St. Peter proceeds, in the second chapter, to describe, out of this "sure word of prophecy," the false prophets and the false teachers who should infest the church; and in the third chapter, the certainty of Christ's coming to judgment, the conflagration of the present heavens and earth, and the structure of the new heavens and earth; and all agreeably to the Revelation. Attention therefore to this book is recommended to us, upon the authority of St. Peter, as well as of the writer, St. John: and a double blessing, as we have seen, in the book itself, is pronounced upon those who shall study and observe it; first, in the beginning (i. 3), "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein;" and here again in the end, xxii. 7, "Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

I now come to show that this divine kingdom of grace, power, and glory, is justly to be ascribed unto our God, and his blessed Christ.

He is the divine founder of it. His hands have laid the foundation, so that it is not by human might, nor by human power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. He formed the glorious plan long before man was created. The man, Christ, being the first-born of every creature, so I apprehend all the human race was contained in him, every soul of man, and from him they came—he breathed them into Adam, and as from him they came, his own pure offspring, he could but love them, being united to him, and centered in him, from eternity; and, therefore, Christ, under the character of Wisdom, says "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works

of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was made. When there was no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the deep; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the great deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him;* and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.*" To this agree the words of our Lord, "for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.†" To the same purpose the Lord speaks, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.‡"

Our Lord says in his last prayer, "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world;" and, if so, he loved all the souls contained in him; and it was highly consistent with his wisdom and goodness to put them into a state of probation, as he did the angels, yet laying them under no absolute restraint, no kind of compulsion, for that would be utterly inconsistent with a state of probation, as well as a future judgment. But, nevertheless, as known unto God are all his works, and likewise whatsoever shall come to pass, he saw they would fall, and therefore took care that a remedy should be provided; hence that glori-

* Prov. viii. 22—33. † John iii. 16.

‡ Jer. xxxi. 3.

ous One, that "First-born of every creature," that original source of all souls, was pleased to take hold of human nature, called the "seed of Abraham," and to be "made all things like unto his brethren," that is, sin only excepted. Hence, he subjected himself to pain and poverty — to shame and reproach—to distresses and persecutions —agony and death; thus he was "in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin was condemned," that he might condemn sin in the flesh, and thus gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.

This Holy One, by an inconceivable union, is so connected with Jehovah, that he is One with him, insomuch that "he who hath seen Him, hath seen the Father also," and could, without any impeachment of blasphemy say, "I and my Father are one.* " From this inconceivable union results all our life and happiness, and the full redemption of lost souls. Here is the immovable foundation laid in Zion, and here "will he build his church, so that all the powers of hell shall not be able to prevail." He will revive lively stones out of the rubbish, poor fallen souls in feeble houses of clay, and will form them like unto himself, a beautiful Bride—a spotless church, conformed in all things unto their living Head—a glorious head, and glorious members—a compact and a complete body, without rent or schism, world without end.

This blessed redemption, and never-failing remedy, lay deeply concealed in the bosom of the Deity, and committed to our covenant head, the Lord from heaven, who was to undertake our cause, and in the fulness of time, was to manifest that council of peace to a ruined race, which he hath declared in such words as never man spake, and confirmed by a life of purity, labour, and toil; by reproaches and slander, by long-suffering and patience, in a body of the same nature as that which sinned; and ratifying and

* John x. 30.

sealing the unsearchable riches of grace by unknown agonies, cries, and tears, in blood and death, upon the cross. O, love immense! O, love stronger than death! Amazing stoop of majesty divine! Lord, what is man? What is a sinful worm? Thine own offspring! fallen among thieves; stripped, naked, bleeding to death—lying slain, and perishing! But thou, O good Samaritan, camest where he was; thou sawest him, and hadst compassion; hast bound up his wounds, sweetly pouring in the oil and wine of grace and mercy, and hast made him the object of thy tender care. Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad, let the inhabitants of the rock sing, for the Lord hath appeared in our nature, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. "The vessel which was made of clay was marred," even as it were, "in the hands of the potter; but he makes it again another vessel, as it seemeth good to the potter to make it.*"

All this is confirmed by St. Paul, who saith, "He hath saved us, and called us, with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Given us in Christ Jesus, as our covenant head, as our divine surety, as our advocate and mediator, who was to manage our cause, but now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel.†" It is now *made manifest*, a glorious truth, to the unspeakable comfort of all who receive it; it "looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon;" but now it will be "clear as the sun, and irresistible as an army with banners.‡" And no wonder; for the great impediments being removed, the clouds being dispersed, the Sun of righteousness will arise with healing in his wings. The

* Jer. xviii. 4. † 1 Tim. i. 9, 10.

‡ Song vi. 10.

great apostle had a view of things from the frame of the temple service, which he could not then speak particularly to,* not only on account of the dullness of his readers, but, it is highly probable, he had not words to express his ideas with; language failed, words were too weak, and, therefore, the amazing scene must speak for itself. "Great," indeed, "is the mystery of godliness—God manifested in the flesh;" and now, when the light from eternity shines upon this mystery, the shadows flee away, while God reveals the heights and depths of grace by his Spirit.

To this end we read, "And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us rejoice, and be glad, and give honor to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.†" His name, who died for sinners, which was before concealed, will now be conspicuous upon his vesture, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.‡ The vail being rent in twain from the human heart, how glorious must it be to see such multitudes of blessed prophecies fully accomplished, and that accomplishment so glorious an illustration of the same. They will be seen to shine in their own original brightness; like valuable fruits, concealed in the shell or husk, which shell being removed, the precious kernel is now enjoyed, and its rich flavor is tasted. The dross is removed, and the pure gold shines with heavenly lustre—the darkness is past, and the true light shineth. A variety of far-fetched conjectures

* Heb. ix. 5. † Rev. xix. 5, 6, 7.

‡ Rev. v. 6.

being set aside, and the truth, as it is in Jesus, speaks for itself, so that its voice shall go into all lands to the glory of the Deity.

He is not only the founder of this increasing, and never-ending kingdom, but he is its builder and supporter. The government is upon his shoulder, who is the Wonderful,* the Counsellor Divine; and his divine shoulder is well able to support the same. It is true, it has got a numerous set of very potent enemies, who are using every stratagem to overthrow it; but he must reign till all his enemies become his footstool.† He will put down all rule and authority, whether they be thrones, principalities, and powers; every knee must bow, and all must own his divine and sovereign sway. He is the stone cut out without hands, and must break and subdue all opposition, and stand fast for ever. His hands have laid the foundation, and he will not fail to bring the topstone with shouting, crying, Grace, grace for ever. Hence he is styled our Shield, our Buckler, Horn, and Tower, to flee to in every time of trouble. He is styled a Man of War, and will not be overcome. I apprehend the war is now carrying on between the Lamb and the Dragon; but the Lamb is sure to prevail, and the grand accuser must be brought down; and safe are they who dwell under the shadow of the Saviour's wing. He is mounted already upon his white horse, and will go from conquering to conquer. May he gird his sword upon his thigh, and, in his glory and majesty, ride on prosperously till all are subdued.

He will be the accomplisher of his own designs; and though it is not for us to know the times and the seasons which he hath reserved in his own power, yet will he not fail, nor be discouraged, till he hath set forth judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law. History informs us, that many of the threatnings are already accom-

* Isaiah ix. 16. † Psalm cx, 1.

plished in several states and kingdoms, as the four grand empires, namely, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman, to say nothing of inferior states; likewise the dispersion of the Jews; and at the time of those menacing predictions, there was little outward appearance of any thing of the kind, for some of those kingdoms were in the zenith of their glory, and was before others even existed; yet they rose, they fell, just as it was foretold. And can we suppose the all-gracious Parent of Good, to be more exact and punctual in rigorous, just, and awful vengeance, than he is in mercy, pity, and compassion? What! is his mercy clean gone? or hath he forgotten to be gracious? or is he not able to make good his promises? Dreadful to indulge the smallest thought therein. Or hath he more delight in destroying than in saving? or in breaking down than in binding up? Far be the gloomy thought from every faithful breast. O for more faith! more confidence in Him that cannot lie. Hath he declared it, and shall it not come to pass? Hath he said it, and will not he make it good? Surely heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of what God hath said, shall pass till all is fulfilled. He declared that kingdoms rise, flourish, and decline; and it came to pass: so he hath declared that the kingdom of grace shall flourish; that Satan shall be bound; Anti-christ shall be destroyed; the gospel shall be universally preached; and the Spirit poured out upon all flesh; his ancient people gathered in, with the fulness of the Gentiles; that the wolf and the lamb shall dwell together, and the cow and bear shall feed; that their young ones shall lie down together; that instead of the thorn shall be the fir-tree, instead of the brier shall be the myrtle; that universal harmony and benevolence, love, and concord, shall take place; and will he not accomplish his word? How solemnly does he speak respecting the veracity of his word! "Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the

ordinances of the moon, and of the stars for a light by night, who divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name:—If those ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.* " The sum of this solemn asseveration is, if the lights of heaven can be put out before their appointed time, then shall my word of promise fail. Nay, our Lord declares, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

Let these pleasing reflections animate all such as may be sighing and mourning for the iniquity of our sinful land; the time is coming, and, perhaps, not far off, when righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the face of the great deep—when all shall know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest—when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess Jesus to be the Lord to the glory of the Father. Then riot and drunkenness shall cease, and the horrid clamour of blasphemy and prophaneness shall be eternally silenced. The honor of the great Jehovah, and the interests of the dear Redeemer, shall no longer be trampled under foot; distress and anguish shall be no more. Hail, happy days! when sorrow and sighing shall be finally done away! when the Lord God shall wipe off all tears from all faces, and the rod of the oppressor shall be for ever broken. Hail, happy days! when the Sun of Righteousness shall shine through every cloud, in his own clear meridian splendour! What wisdom, love, and power shall flame forth from the glorious face of our incarnate Jehovah! How confounded must the Deist stand, the infidel Socinian, or the inconsistent Arian? These enemies to the cross of Christ must stand amazed; look upon him whom they have pierced, and be in great bitterness; yet thanks be to the Lamb, they may find

* Jer. xxxi. 35, 36.

him, though rejected long, their present and almighty Saviour, and believing, shall have life through his ever blessed name.

Ride on, eternal King of Glory, till all shall bow down before thee; claim a ransomed world for thine own; assert thy right, maintain thine own cause.

> Thine the kingdom, power, and glory;
> Thine the ransom'd nations are;
> Let the heathen fall before thee;
> Let the isles thy power declare.

Perhaps we are upon the dawn of that blessed day; several things seem to encourage us to hope so. God can over-rule a variety of things which may, at first sight, appear foreign to that blessed end. The spreading of the Bible up and down in Popish countries, such as France and Spain, wears a pleasant aspect; and the softening of that bigotted zeal, which has been such a disgrace to the Christian name, must be highly acceptable to the lovers of a dear Redeemer. The gospel begins to find its evening way into various parts, and even among the poor blacks in the West India islands; and should that long race of sufferers once regain their liberty, we might expect a glorious harvest from thence. Let us be thankful for the least glimmering ray of heavenly glory, and hope it never will be clouded again, but shine more and more to the perfect day. Let us believe that the little one will become a thousand, and the small one a mighty nation. Do thou, Lord God, hasten it in its time. Amen! even so, Lord Jesus.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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APPENDIX.

ON THE MILLENNIUM KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

"THE doctrine of the millennium, or future paradisiacal state of the earth," says a late reviewer, "is not of Christian, but Jewish origin; which fixes the duration of the world, in its present imperfect state, to six thousand years; and announces the approach of a sabbath, of a thousand years of universal peace, to be ushered in by the GLORIOUS ADVENT OF THE MESSIAH." This doctrine may be traced in the epistle of Barnabas and Papias: it was adopted by Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and by a long succession of the fathers of the primitive church; and I add, it may be traced throughout the *most ancient volume in the world.* A writer* of the present day, not of this sentiment, says, "there are those who deny this doctrine, who confess it is ANIMATING AND CONSOLATORY, and probable even in the eye of philosophy, and that it will no doubt always retain a number of adherents."

Bishop Burnet, Mr. J. Mede, President Edwards, Dr. Gill, Hopkins, Bishop Newton, Winchester, and many of our most eminent divines, contend for the personal reign of Christ on earth. To use Bishop Newton's own words, in his Dissertations on the Prophecies:—"When these great events shall take place, of which we collect from the prophecies, this to be the proper order; the Protestant witnesses shall be greatly exalted, and the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of their prophesying in sack-

* Evans.

cloth, and of the tyranny of the beast, shall end together; the conversion and restoration of the Jews succeed; then follows the ruin of the Othman empire; and then the total destruction of Rome and of Antichrist. When these great events, I say, shall come to pass, then shall the kingdom of Christ commence, or the reign of the saints upon earth. So Daniel expressly informs us, that the kingdom of Christ and the saints, will be raised upon the ruins of the kingdom of Antichrist, vii. 26, 27, 'But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end; and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.' So, likewise, St. John saith, that upon the final destruction of the 'beast and false prophet,' Rev. xx., 'Satan is bound for a thousand years; and I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years; but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.' It is I conceive, to these great events, the fall of Antichrist, the re-establishment of the Jews, and the beginning of the glorious millennium, that the three different dates in Daniel, of one thousand two hundred and sixty years, one thousand two hundred and ninety years, and one thousand three hundred and thirty-five years, are to be referred; and, as Daniel saith, xii. 12, 'Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five years;' so St. John saith, xx. 6, 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.' Blessed and

and happy indeed, will be this period; and it is very observable, that the martyrs and confessors of Jesus, in Popish as well as in Pagan times, will be raised to partake of this felicity. Then shall all these gracious promises in the Old Testament be fulfilled, of the amplitude and extent, of the peace and prosperity, of the glory and happiness of the church, in the latter days. Then, in the full sense of the words, Rev. xi. 15, 'shall the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.' According to a celebrated writer, (Bishop Burnet, in his Theory of the Earth) these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the saints, will be the *seventh* millennary of the world; for as God created the world in six days, and rested on the *seventh*, so the world, it is agreed, will continue six thousand years, and the *seventh* thousand will be the great *sabbatism*, or holy rest, to the people of God."

It is not less strange than true, that the events of the last thirty years,—astonishing events, I say, relative to the millennium, are scarcely noticed by those preachers who ought to deem it their duty and privilege to observe the *signs of the times.* The changes that have taken place in the ancient kingdom of France, of the Gallican church, of the pontificate of the Germanic empire, of Spain, Portugal, Naples, Piedmontese, and South America, including several Protestant states and kingdoms, have all been generally treated, by most modern commentators, as *common events.* The dominions of ecclesiastical princes have been secularized. Celibacy, monasteries, and other useless foundations, in some part of the beast's empire, have been abolished, and industry established on their ruins; particularly in Spain, the condition of the Jews has been greatly ameliorated. That there are *few who bear testimony* to these truths, I admit, and the lisping of the modest few has been lost, in the clamour and confusion of the many who write for the multitude.

Let us return to our subject, which we shall find to be strikingly illustrated by the number *seven*, in many parts of the Old and New Testament. "*Seven* is a perfect number; and has been in a particular manner adopted, to point out the duration of the whole mystery of God. Rev. x. 7. In six days God made the world, and rested on the *seventh;* so the Lord sanctified that day.* Why should we disregard the prophetic design? The first millennium day seems to close with Enoch, the seventh from Adam. During which period the light shone in the first promise and offering of Abel; but the appearance of Christ's kingdom in this period, was remarkably different from that of any future day. The second day includes from Enoch to the calling of Abraham, a day most remarkably distinguished by the flood, and the establishment and distinction in Noah's family. The third day, running from

* "The duration of the world has been divided by ages. The patriarchal age continued 2513 years, from the creation of the world to the departure of the Hebrews from Egypt. The ceremonial age, 1491 years, from the mission of Moses to the incarnation of Christ. Of the Christian age from the birth of our Saviour, have, according to common calculation, elapsed 1821 years; so that we conclude we have only 179 years to come, to close the sixth millennary. Again 6000 years were appointed for the labour of this life; after which time, the saints will enjoy a sabbath with God—that is, rest for ever with him. Allowing 2000 years before the law, 2000 years under the law, and 2000 years under the gospel dispensation. Thus the six thousand years of the world, are the six days of the week before God; and the eternal sabbath of the saints, in the repose of glory, will be the seventh. This ancient tradition of the Jews, which the first fathers of the church willingly received, places with us the coming of the Messiah in the year of the world 4000."

DUCTOR HISTORICUS.

Abraham to David, arises with new splendour; the promise to Abraham and his seed gave a new display of the gospel; and in his family the church of God was established. As in the third day of natural creation, the separation of the waters and production of *earth* and *seas*, was God's leading work,—so, in this corresponding period, God separated the twelve tribes from the surrounding nations, and formed them as his own peculiar people. The fourth day reaches from Solomon to Christ, a period in which God's creating power was displayed in a very distinguished point of view, in Solomon's throne and kingdom, his servants and household; the sight of which left no more spirits in Sheba. God established his great lights in his church and firmament, those lights which were to be supported before God in Jerusalem. The overturnings of the Jewish kingdom, and the consequences to the nations, the scriptures of the prophets, and the approach of the desire of all nations, distinguished the works of this day. The fifth day reached to the depth of anti-christian darkness, and produced those great whales and monsters which that power exhibited. The sixth day will finally restore man to the image and likeness of God; and introduce him to the exercise of that dominion and rule, in the kingdom of Christ, with which he is to be gloriously invested on the SEVENTH DAY; that day of refreshment from the presence of the Lord, when God shall rejoice in all his works, and men enjoy the *highest fellowship and communion with God, his Maker and Redeemer*, who is called the beginning or head of this creation; and who proclaims, "Behold, I make all things anew." It is in this day, all things being restored, that man will be restored to the PARADISE OF GOD, to eat there of the tree of life; and drink of that pure river, clear as crystal, which proceeds out of the throne of God. The *seventh* day is much spoken of in prophecy; sometimes as a day,

at others as a week, month, or year: thus we shall find it termed in the same verse, the day of vengeance, and the year of God's redeemed. In the morning of this day, the upright shall have the dominion, the blessed and holy who are to have part in the *first resurrection*, and are then to be raised and fashioned like their glorified Head. This day is called the day of judgment, for in it God will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained. He shall bring forth the righteousness of *his people* as the light, and their judgment as the noon-day. Angels shall this day be judged by the saints, so will the great whore,* or *antichristian kingdom*. In the evening of this day, the dead shall be judged out of those things which are written in the book.

God has been carrying on this new creation ever since the day he preached the gospel in promise to Adam; and the new creation shall be carried on and completed: and in the seventh day, that is the *seventh* thousand year, shall be his *glorious sabbatism*, or rest; in which all his *elect* shall participate. We read of a blessing on the *seventh* day and on the *seventh* year. The number *seven* was reckoned a critical period in a person's life.—(See the word Climacterical, Barclay's Dictionary.)

In the scriptures we find *seven* applied to abominations, altars, angels, baskets, brethren, bullocks, candlesticks, chamberlains, churches, counsellors, crowns, cubits, daughters, days, deacons, devils, ears of corn, ewe lambs, eyes, heads, he goats, horns, loaves, locks of hair, maidens, mouths, mountains, nations, oxen, parts, pillars, pipes, plains, priests, princes, rams, sabbaths, seals, shepherds, sons, souls, spirits, stars, steps, streams, things, thunders,

* Antichrist is called the great whore, and mother of harlots and abominations, because of her apostacy and idolatry, and her decoying of others; such apostacy being called fornication, whoredom, or adultery. Rev. xvii. and xix. 2.

times, tribes, troubles, trumpets, vials, ways, weeks, withes, women, wreaths of chain-work, and years.*

Again, forty, or forty-two, as including six sevens, became a prophetical number; and, indeed, almost all the periods, times, and seasons in prophecy, have a respect to this number. God added seven days to his promised patience towards the old world: clean beasts were taken into the ark by *sevens:* the years of plenty and famine in Egypt, and their emblems, were marked by *sevens.* (Gen. viii. and xli.) With the Jews, not only was there a *seventh* day sabbath, but every *seventh* year was a sabbath of rest; and every seven times *seven* years was a JUBILEE: then great feasts of unleavened bread and of tabernacles, were observed for *seven* days: the number of animals, in sundry of their oblations, was stinted to *seven:* the golden candlestick had *seven* branches: *seven* priests, with *seven* trumpets, surrounded the walls of Jericho *seven* days, and *seven* times *seven* on the *seventh:* in John's Revelation, we find *seven* churches, *seven* candlesticks, *seven* spirits, *seven* stars, *seven* seals, *seven* trumpets, *seven* thunders, *seven* vials, *seven* plagues, and *seven* angels to pour them out on the *seven*-headed monster *Antichrist.* "The whole book of Revelations divides itself into *seven* parts, and comprehends *seven* periods of time. Lastly, the whole is com-

* Search the scriptures, says our great master; seek the aid of the eternal spirit of God; they only are able to make us wise unto salvation. It is against reason to believe upon trust without examination, for our Lord commands us to search; which implies that kind of searching by which gold and silver are discovered under ground. The wisdom of scripture is like treasure hid in a field, here a little and there a little, under all kinds of soils; as such, we ought to dig in every place of scripture, both likely and unlikely. Many readers will run over various places of the sacred page, without finding one object to draw their attention. Let us zealously search, then, for those treasures, which will never rust nor decay.

pleted in the millennium, or *seventh millenary* of the world. There being a thousand years of grace and peace, harmony and love, after six thousand of sin and sorrow, confusion and division. For, as there were two thousand before the law, and two thousand under the law, so there will, probably, be two thousand under the gospel, or, as the Jews have it, the Messiah: but the *seventh* millenary shall be spent in love and joy, and peace and harmony; without interruption, either from pope or devil, or wicked men or satanic spirits.

"It has been observed by some writers, that the number *seven* is to be found in a remarkable manner in the book of nature, as well as in the book of Revelations. The heavens, it is said, are furnished with *seven* planets, and the earth with *seven* metals. Light, the great object of the eye, consists of rays of *seven* different colours; and in the musical sounds, the delight of the ear, are *seven* notes; between which, and the *seven* colours of light, when thrown by the prism on a perpendicular surface, naturalists have discovered a correspondence and proportion truly surprizing; for the lines of separation between the colours, mark the precise points where a musical string must terminate, to sound the seven notes. We shall find important edification by attending to the numbers and periods. After *seven* days I will bring a flood upon the earth: the seven days must be completed before the flood came: and the *seven* days of the new creation will be completed before God's final judgment shall be executed. The flood continued forty days, during which time, the church of Christ was tossed on the waves;—corresponding with the forty years that Israel wandered in the wilderness. The forty days of Elijah's fast; the forty years of David's tossed and afflicted reign, previous to the peaceable kingdom of Solomon, the son of rest; the forty days of our Lord's temptation in the wilderness; the forty days he went out and in among his disciples, before he

was taken up from among them; and many similar typical periods. Noah lived six hundred years, and in the six hundred and first he entered into the ark,—so shall the church of God subsist six thousand years; and in the six thousand and first year shall the family of Noah find rest on the mountain of Ararat: for we are told, (Gen. viii. 13) 'It came to pass, in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, and in the first day of the month, Noah removed the covering of the ark.' Was this written to make us chronologers? No; it was written that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. Let every man judge for himself. We feel a confidence that the six days, six sevens, six centuries, and six thousand years of the church's worldly duration, being finished,—in the first day of the following period, very early in the morning, as it dawns to the last sabbatism, Noah's whole family, *the spiritual house of Christ,* shall enter into rest; and the covering spread over the face of all flesh, shall be removed. It is not improbable, that, as the flood came towards the end of the six hundredth year of Noah, so, in the sixth millennium, the church shall experience what Daniel calls a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation upon earth. This period is elsewhere called *the days of vengeance;* and of them it is said, that except these days were shortened, no flesh could be saved: but for the *elect's sake* these days shall be shortened." (Morrison.)

I proceed—the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar was seven times heated; and I am disposed to think, that the seven times more plagues, mentioned in Leviticus, xxvi. 21, have a reference to the *seven* last plagues of Antichrst. Again, the *seventh* day, and the *seventh* week, were set apart as peculiarly sacred: and in Leviticus, chap. xxii., we see the *seventh* month was dedicated to the Lord. Every new moon was ushered in with the sound of trumpets; but on the appearing of the *seventh* moon there was a peculiar

sound of triumph, and a feast, which was denominated the feast of trumpets: the *seventh* moon was set apart for this purpose, because it was intended to point out the important period when the following scripture shall be fulfilled: *God is gone up with a shout, and the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.* (Psalm xlvii. 5.) *Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound.*—namely, *the sound of the true gospel trumpet: they shall abide all day in the light of thy countenance.* (Psalm lxxxix. 15.) If the returning light of heaven made the Jews rejoice, ought not we to rejoice in the more brilliant light of life and immortality, shining in the FACE OF JESUS CHRIST, an earnest of the complete fulfilment of the prophet's words—*Thy light is come; thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw herself.* (Isaiah, lx. 20.) By trumpets the Jews were regulated in their march through the wilderness; and by them they were assembled for worship, as well as alarmed for war. How did Joshua attack Jericho? He sent *seven* priests, bearing *seven* trumpets, on *seven* successive days, round the city; and on the *seventh* day, they went round *seven* times; and on the priests blowing a long blast, the people were *commanded to shout, when the walls of Jericho fell down.* In like manner, before the city or church of Antichrist shall be utterly destroyed, and every Canaanite taken away, we find *seven trumpets are to be sounded;* and while the *seventh* is sounding, *seven* vials of wrath shall be poured out, which are to be followed by the cry of BABYLON IS FALLEN, *and the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ.* (Rev. xi. 15, and xviii. 2.) Again, the morning of the *seventh* period, when Christ shall descend with power and great glory, when the trumpet of God shall sound, even the voice of the archangel, which all who are in their graves shall hear, and live. Once more, the great key of the scripture numbers, is *seven*. Those who have observed the history of

the church, will perceive, that *seven* formed a complete revolution or change in her situation: when the great Creator finished his work, he sanctified the *seventh* day; when the God of Israel had conducted his church into the earthly Canaan, he called them to rest with him: when the Lord of the sabbath arose from the dead, he sanctified the first day of the week as the day on which he entered into his rest; and now he calls his people to rest with him, and to rejoice, because *he is risen indeed*, and become the first fruits of them that slept: and they shall commence an eternal sabbath with him on the morning of the resurrection.

I shall here subjoin an analogy between the first and second creation, by Morrison, with some trifling alteration at the close of the article. "The account of the first creation, as delivered by the Spirit of God, contains all is necessary for man to know on this subject. It is written, however, to inform the Christian about what more nearly interests him, viz.: The restitution of all things by the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. The entrance of the curse by sin has marred all the works of God. The raging elements, the still more boisterous passions of the human mind, the ferocity of the brute creation, and above all, death, too plainly prove an awful alteration in the works of God since they were declared very good.

"It was a very general opinion among the Jews, and it has been adopted by many since, that when the Psalmist says 'one day is with the Lord as a thousand years,' (Psalm xc.) there is an express reference to the days of the creation. This appears plainly to be supported by the manner in which the text is quoted, 2 Peter iii. 8, where it is adduced as a proof, that the Lord is not slack concerning his promise of coming again, to restore a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Although I will not vouch for the accuracy of every point, it may prove useful as a key to those who wish to trace

this subject farther, just to mention, that as the evening and morning distinguished each of the six days in the first creation, so we shall find every evening and morning of the new creation marked in like manner, at every thousand years. Thus the entrance of sin and death with the light of the gospel, were the evening and morning of the first day, or first thousand years. The universal wickedness of mankind, the deluge and destruction of the old world, with the deliverance of Noah, and the renewal of the covenant of grace with him, were the evening and morning of the second day. The world sunk in idolatry, and the calling of Abraham, with the covenant renewed by God to him, bounded the third day. The gross departure of the church of Israel after the gods of the nations, and the sure mercies of the true God, covenanted to David and Solomon, bounded or terminated the fourth day. Darkness filling the earth, and gross darkness obscuring the minds of the people, before the light which God had prepared,—a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel, began to spring, bounded the fifth day. The darkness of antichrist, and the angel flying through the midst of heaven preaching the everlasting gospel, bounded the sixth day. The ushering in of the Son of Righteousness in the morning of the first resurrection, will bound the seventh thousand years which God hath sanctified and set apart, for the refreshment of the people of God.

" A very great similarity may be traced in the works of the corresponding days of the first and second creation.—Thus, the first day produced light to this lower world; and this we see previous to the sun being placed in the heavens: in like manner, the promised seed of the woman beamed light into the hearts of Adam and his guilty family; and the spreading of this light by Abel's sacrifice, Enoch's translation, &c., seems to have been the principal work of God in his new creation, during the first thousand

years. On the second day, we find the separation of the waters by the firmament; and in the second thousand years, we not only find the separation by the flood, but a most awful separation between the sons of God and the children of men. On the third day, we find earth and seas distinguished: in like manner, in the third millennium, we have the separation of the church of God from the world, which began in the calling of Abraham, and is carried on in the history of his posterity. In a word, the history of the third thousand years, or third millennium, namely, from Abraham to David, is pretty amply related; and is an obvious narration of God's separating the spiritual seed from the seas or collected people: in this day, the herbs in the church or garden of God, were planted. On the fourth day, the two great lights were planted in the heavens, namely, the kingdom and church of Christ, established before God, as a light before him in Jerusalem; this was the lamp ordained for God's anointed. On the fifth day, the waters produced the great whales and fish of every kind: and, in the fifth millennium, life appeared bringing forth abundantly among the nations; and at the same time, the great leviathan, the anti-christian kingdom, was the peculiar work of this millennium. In the sixth day, beasts and cattle were created; and, finally, man, in the image of God, to have dominion over all the works of God. In the thirteenth chapter of Revelations, we have the two appearances of the anti-christian kingdom represented; first, as the great beast from the sea, which we have already seen on the preceding day, and a second beast from the earth. Perhaps, also, the renewed light of Christianity, over what in scripture figure may be called the earth, may be included in the work of this day. But, lastly, the finishing work of the creation of God shall be displayed in the resurrection of the elect, who, as they have borne the image of the earthly, are now to appear in the divine nature, in the perfect image of the

heavenly. We know not what we shall be, but we know that when he who is our *life* shall appear, we shall be like him. Man, who forfeited the proper dominion over this lower world, with which he was invested, shall now be restored to it in its utmost perfection."

The temper of the present day, leaves a striking analogy to that which blinded the Jews concerning our Lord's coming; and which fitted them for wrath to the uttermost. Misguided by hopes of a flourishing reign of the Jewish kingdom, and applying the scriptures of the prophets to favor and cherish this idea, they crucified the Lord of glory. The first stated institution which revelation records, the sanctification of the seventh day, that is, the Sabbath, is manifestly figurative* of this important part of the Christian hope; and a cursory glance through the Scriptures will abundantly convince us that this figure is more fully explained, and never lost sight of throughout the whole Old Testament. Although this opinion is rather a subject of derision, it is not to be less attended to, if supported by scripture. That the six days of the first creation corresponded with the six days of the new creation of God, and that in this sense one day is with the Lord as a thousand years; it hence naturally follows that the *seventh* day, in which God rested and was refreshed, is figurative of that rest which *remaineth for the people of God*, and those

* Attention to the typical fulfilment of Scripture, furnishes us with powerful arguments for its divine original. By what natural coincidence can we attempt to account for the following circumstances:—From the calling of Abraham to the exodus from Egypt, includes about 420 years; from the exodus to the building of the first temple 420 years; the duration of that temple 420 years; the duration of the second temple, from its cleansing and consecration to its destruction, about 420 years. On considering that each of these periods has the same typical object, it will appear very striking.

times of refreshing which Christ's elect shall enjoy in the presence of the Lord.

Again, it is recorded that Jesus Christ suffered death on the *sixth day*, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and that there was a great darkness, such as was never seen before nor since. Matt. xxvii. 45. "Now from the *sixth* hour there was *darkness** over all the land until the ninth hour;" namely, from twelve o'clock until three, "*when*

* An anonymous author says—"Whether this darkness was confined to the land of Judea, or extended itself much farther, even over the whole hemisphere where it happened, is a question wherein the ancients are not so well agreed. Origen is of the former opinion, but the majority differ from him; and for this they quote Phlegon, the famous astronomer under the Emperor Trajan; assuming, that in the fourth year of the two hundred and second olympiad, (which is supposed to be that of the death of Christ,) there was such a total eclipse of the sun at noon day, that the stars were plainly to be seen." Ferguson, in his astronomy, says—Phlegon mistook the darkness of the sun, which happened at Christ's crucifixion, for an eclipse. Bunting says—There was an eclipse of the moon about night, when Jesus was buried. But it appears, in the same book of Ferguson's, under the catalogue of eclipses, that there was not an eclipse of the moon at that time; consequently, Bunting was mistaken, as was Phlegon. And from Suidas, they likewise cite Dionysius the Areopagite, then at Heliopolis, in Egypt, expressing himself to his friend Apollophanes, upon this surprising phenomenon in this manner,—Either the author of nature suffers, or he is sympathising with some one who does. But, whereas, in common eclipses, the sun's total darkness can continue but twelve or fifteen minutes at most, this is recorded to have lasted no less than three full hours; and it being full moon, there could be no conjunction; nor, consequently, any natural eclipse. This must be understood of the hemisphere being then involved in darkness. The sun enlightens only one half of the earth at once, that half

Jesus cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and gave up the Ghost." Remark, the next day was a high Sabbath; this might typify the suffering of Christ's church, as *many* have supposed, among whom we may rank Dr. Gill, which will be the greatest near the end of the *six thousand* years, and spiritual darkness will nearly eclipse the world; and that we are now bordering on these confines of darkness, when the *true gospel* will be nearly obscured by Popish and Arminian delusions.

which is at any moment turned towards him, and being withdrawn from the opposite half, leaves it in darkness. When the sun's light is so intercepted by the moon, that to any place of the earth the sun appears partly or wholly covered, he is said to undergo an eclipse; though, properly speaking, it is only an eclipse of that part of the earth where the moon's shadow, or penumbra, falls. When the earth comes between the sun and moon, the moon falls into the earth's shadow; and having no light of her own, she suffers a real eclipse from the interception of the sun's rays. The moon can never be full but when she is opposite to the sun; nor can she ever be eclipsed but at the time of her being full. From eclipses, and the great anomalies in the lunar motions, there appears an incontestible demonstration of the non eternity of the universe: for it seems confirmed by undeniable proofs, that the moon now finishes her period in less time than formerly, and will continue by the centripetal law, to approach nearer and nearer the earth, and to go sooner and sooner round it. Nor will the centrifugal power be sufficient to compensate the different gravitations of such an assemblage of bodies as constitute the solar system; which would come to ruin of itself without some new regulation and adjustment of the original motions. It is evident, that the darkness at our Lord's crucifixion was altogether supernatural; for he suffered on the day on which the passover was eaten by the Jews; on which day it was impossible that the moon's shadow could fall on the earth, for the Jews kept the passover at the time of the full moon.

How many of the Old Testament prophecies are not only unfulfilled, but falsified, concerning the spiritual reign of Christ, and the restoration of the Jews, which shall usher in the millennium, if all the hopes of Canaan are over. What can Ezekiel intend by saying, "they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, *wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children's children*," *&c.?* Again, what can he mean by describing a *glorious temple* to be built, and the glorious entrance of the Son of God? What by the new division of the land of Canaan? Since the time that he prophesied, not one of all his sayings on this subject have had any degree of fulfilment; but they assuredly shall hereafter. When the disciples said to their Lord, *Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?* There was an important meaning in the question, which has been much obscured. It has been said that from their carnality and ignorance of the nature of Christ's kingdom, they expected him to establish a worldly kingdom. Had this been the meaning of their question, he who said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God but those that be of men," he would not have passed such a question without reproof. But we do not find him so much as insinuating that they were under any mistake: no, he had been speaking to them during the forty preceding days, of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; and he by no means denies that the kingdom would be restored to Israel: but as for the *time when, it is not for you to know the times and the seasons, &c.* This much only, I would have you know, that before the kingdom can be restored, the gospel must be preached to the uttermost parts of the earth; Abraham must yet possess the land; Isaac and Jacob, who only dwelt there in tents, must yet have a sure dwelling place; Joseph's bones must be raised; Moses must see the land of which he had only a glimpse upon mount

Nebo. It is not said to seeds as of many, but of one, that is Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the seed, the heir of him to whom Canaan belongs; and he shall descend from heaven to take to him his great power, and reign; but his great and wide dominion shall extend from the river to the ends of the earth. The kingdoms of this world shall then become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. These are important truths, and full of consolation; and we see no reasons for keeping them back; as they are consistent with the oracles of God.

The truth of this doctrine is to be found throughout the bible,—the grand master key; and if this most ancient book be true, as true it is to a demonstration, it must be the original standard of all ideas upon this subject, or rather the source from which they should spring; and the more I have read, the more my authorities have increased. The doctrine of the millennium is sublime; and to a believer, appears infinitely beyond the scale of human invention: and truth will be, like its author, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Whatever men may think or say, while health and strength attend them, it is usually seen, that the word of God, and the things of God, appear in no ridiculous view, in no illusive colours, but in sober solemn greatness, when *the flesh and heart begin to fail*, and when both perceive their *want of a portion for ever*. Therefore, "awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Eph. v. 14.)—These words are not spoken to dead sinners, but to sleepy, drowsy professors, got into the company of carnal men, dead in sins; from whose conversation, which encourages a drowsy frame, they are called: and now being called to awake, and being awake, they ought to keep so, and not fall asleep again; and the rather, since the grand enemy of Christ and his church, is busy in sowing his tares of false doctrines; which to do, is now his proper time and opportunity. "While men slept, his enemy came and

sowed tares." (Matt. xiii. 25.) "A general sleepiness," says Gill, "will sieze professors of religion; the wise as well as foolish virgins will slumber and sleep, when the approach of the bridegroom is near; immortality and profaneness will again spread in the world; and it will be as in the days of Noah and Lot; and in this condition will Christ find the world and the church, when he comes a second time; which is what will introduce his glorious reign."

"We come now to the closing subject, the personal reign of Christ.—First, There will be a personal appearance of the Son of God, and a glorious one it will be: he will personally appear, *the Lord himself shall descend;* (1 Thess. iv. 16) not by his Spirit, or by the communication of his gracious presence, as before; but in person he will descend from the third heaven, where he is in our nature, into the air, where he will be visible; *every eye shall see him*, when *he cometh with clouds*, (Rev. i. 7) or in the clouds of heaven, which will be his chariot; he will descend on earth at the proper time; *and his feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives;* (Zech. xiv. 4) on that spot of ground from whence he ascended to heaven.—Job seems to have this descent of his in view, when he says, 'He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth;' which seems to respect not so much his first coming, as his second; since it is connected with the resurrection of the dead.

"This appearance of Christ will be a very glorious one; it is called 'the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ:' (Tit. ii. 13) for he will appear under both characters to his people: when he appeared the first time, it was in the form of a servant, he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; but now he will come as King of kings, and Lord of lords; then he was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, to bear the sins, and work out the salvation of his people; but now he will ap-

pear without sin, to put them into the full possession of the salvation obtained for them: he will come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels; he will appear in the glory of his Deity, and all the perfections of it; who is 'the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" it will then be evident, that he is the *Lord God Omnipotent* that reigneth; and that he is *Omniscient*, the searcher of the hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men; (Rev. xix. 6 and ii. 23) and he will be seen in all the glory of his human nature, and with that glory he has with the Father as Mediator: all which, in some sense, may be said to be the Father's, because his divine glory is the same with his Father's; and his human and mediatorial glory is what he has from him; and he will come with all that power and authority vested in him by his Father, as the Judge of the world: he will be attended with his holy angels, as when on Mount Sinai, and as when he ascended to heaven; whom he will employ in one kind of service or another, and who will make a considerable figure in his apparatus: to which may be added, that all the saints will come along with Christ; the souls of all that have departed from the beginning of the world, in order to be re-united to their bodies, which will now be raised; there will be Adam, and there will be Abraham, and all the antediluvian and postdiluvian saints, Old and New Testament ones; when Christ will be glorified in them, and admired by them, and they shall appear with him in glory.

There will succeed new heavens and a new earth, which God has promised, and which the apostle Peter says, saints *look for according to his promise;* and which the apostle John had a vision of. (2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1.) In this new earth Christ will descend and dwell; here the *tabernacle of God* will be with men, and *he shall dwell with them;* this will be the seat of Christ's personal reign;

here he will reign before his ancients gloriously; here he will have his palace, and keep his court, and display his glory, and the greatness of his majesty; and here his people will dwell with him, who will now be *all righteous*, perfectly so, even righteousness itself; for in these new heavens and new earth will *dwell righteousness*: (Isaiah, lx. 21; 2 Peter, iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 27) nothing shall enter in this glorious new Jerusalem state that makes abomination or a lie; it will be perfectly a holy city, consisting wholly of holy persons; wherefore *blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection:* (Rev. xx. 6) nor will there be any enemy to annoy the saints in this state; the wicked will be all burnt and destroyed at the general conflagration; the beast and false prophet, before this, will be cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone; Satan will be bound by Christ, and cast into the bottomless pit, where he will remain till the thousand years are fulfilled: for so long will this state continue; so long Satan will be bound; so long the saints will live and reign with Christ; (Rev. xx. 1—6) this will be the day of the Lord, which is as a thousand years, and which thousand years will be as one day. (2 Pet. iii. 8.) At the close of these years Satan will be loosed again, and the wicked dead will be raised;* which, with the whole possee of devils, will make the Gog and Magog army, who shall be in the four quarters of the world, and go upon the breadth of the earth; and whose number shall be as the sand of the sea, being all the wicked that have been from the beginning of the world; a large army indeed, such a one as never was before, consisting of enraged devils and of men raised with all that malice and wicked-

* As I do not suppose that the earth, at the conflagration, will be annihilated, or be destroyed, as to the substance of it, only purified by fire, refined and cleared of all noxious qualities, and therefore called a new earth.

ness they died in, with Satan at the head of them: by whom they will be animated to make this last feeble and foolish effort, for their recovery and liberty: in order to which they will compass the camp of the saints about the beloved city; who will be in no manner of pain and uneasiness at the appearance of this seeming formidable army; being clothed with immortality, secured by the power of God, and Christ being in person with them; when fire shall come down from heaven and devour the wicked; the wrath of God shall seize, distress, and terrify them, divert them from their purpose, and throw them into the utmost consternation and confusion; and then they shall be dragged to the tribunal of Christ, and stand before him, small and great, and be judged according to their works, and cast into the lake of fire; where they will be in company with the devil, the beast, and false prophet, and be tormented with them for ever and ever. Rev. xx. 7—15.

"This will issue in the ultimate glory: when the saints shall be for ever with the Lord; shall see him as he is; enjoy uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit; have the company of angels, and be in possession of those things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of." (GILL.)

I shall here subjoin a few remarks on the glorious state of the saints in heaven:—"To describe this glorious state (says Dr. Gill) is a task fitter for an angel than a man, or for a glorified saint in heaven than for a poor frail mortal sinful creature on earth.—The apostle has a strange expression, at first sight, upon this subject: *I reckon*, says he, *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* (Rom. viii. 18.) One would rather have thought he should have said, that all that can be desired and enjoyed, in the present state, are not to be compared or made mention of

with the glory of the other world; but he instances in the sufferings of the saints, the purest part of their services, if they may be called so; and asserts that these are far from being meritorious of this glory, fall infinitely short of it, there being no proportion between them and that; they are *light* afflictions, this a *weight* of glory; they are for a *moment*, this *eternal;* and this is what supports the saints in their suffering circumstances, and makes them *choose afflictions with the people of God*, and to *esteem reproach for Christ's sake, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt;* having *respect unto the recompence of reward;* (Heb. xi. 25, 26) which is of grace, and not of works; and causes them *to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods*, for the sake of Christ, knowing that they *have in heaven a better and an enduring substance* (x. 34).

"At the resurrection, there will be a glory upon the body as well as the soul; a glory equal to that of the sun, moon, and stars; there will also be the vision of God: now we *walk by faith*, then *by sight;* we shall see his *face in righteousness*, yea, *face to face* and even *see him as he is:* (2 Cor. v. 7; Psalm xvii. 15; 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 John, iii. 2) not his essence and nature, so as to comprehend it; but shall have a clear and unbeclouded apprehension of his perfections and glory: we shall *see* God in all his persons; we shall *see* the Father of Christ and ours, who loved us with an everlasting love; yea, *in our flesh shall we see God*, as Job says, chapter xix. 26, 27, and with our corporeal eyes behold the glory of Christ's human body; we shall *see* that beautiful face that was once besmeared with sweat and blood, shine like the sun in its full strength; and those blessed temples that were crowned with thorns, crowned with glory and honor; and him whose hands and feet were pierced with nails, and covered with blood, holding the sceptre of his kingdom, or walking in stately majesty, or sitting on his throne of glory: we shall *see* the blessed Spirit, who convinced us of sin,

righteousness, and judgment, and was our quickener and comforter; who led us into truth, and took of the things of Christ and shewed them to us. Here the saints will *see* and know one another in this perfect state. This question was asked Luther, a little before his death,—Whether we should know one another in the other world? to which he answered, by observing the case of Adam, who knew Eve to be flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, whom he had never seen before. How did he know this? says he, by the Spirit of God, by revelation; so added he, shall we know parents, wives, children, &c., in the other world, and that more perfectly. Besides, how did the apostles know Moses and Elias on the mount with Christ, whom they had *never seen before; no, nor any statue, picture, or representation of them, which was not allowed among the Jews?*—It seems necessary to the felicity of society to know one another; we are never quite free and easy in company, when a stranger is in it we know not; and it will undoubtedly give a pleasure not to be expressed, to *see* and know those personages we then shall. There we shall *see* the first man that was in the world, the head and representative of all mankind, and the figure of him that was to come, with Eve the mother of all living; we shall *see* this happy pair in a more exalted station, than when in a state of innocence in Eden's garden: there we shall *see* the first martyr, whose blood was shed in the cause of religion: there we shall *see* the man that saw two worlds, the old one that then was, and the present one that now is, who built an ark for the saving of himself and family, when the world of the ungodly was swept away: there we shall *see* Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with the rest of the patriarchs, both before and after the flood, and sit down with them in the kingdom of heaven: there we shall *see* Moses, the meekest of men, by whom the Lord did such wonders in the land of Ham, and in the fields of Zoan: there we shall *see* the man after God's own

heart, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, striking his harp to a higher note, and to a better tune: there we shall *see* the evangelic prophet Isaiah, with all the holy prophets who prophesied beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow: there we shall *see* the forerunner and harbinger of Christ, who prepared his way by preaching and baptizing, and who so clearly pointed him out as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world: there we shall *see* the apostles of Christ, the companions of our dear Redeemer, who heard his doctrines, saw his miracles, and were witnesses of his sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven; and were the instruments of spreading the gospel through the several parts of the world, and sealed it with their blood: there we shall *see* the wondrous man (Paul) that was caught up into the third heaven, who heard words unspeakable, not lawful for a man to utter; who preached the gospel from Jerusalem, round about to Illyricum, and was the means of converting so many thousands of souls, and of planting so many churches in the Gentile world. There we shall *see* all the confessors and martyrs of Jesus that have been in all ages; yea, the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven; the bride, the Lamb's wife, with the glory of God upon her; even the whole innumerable company of the chosen, redeemed, and called ones, *clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands.*"

The contemplation of this glorious subject, may lead us to say, with the sweet singer in Israel,—

"Raise, thee, my soul, fly up and run
Through every heavenly street
And say, there's nought below the sun,
That's worthy of thy feet.

"There on a high majestic throne
Th' almighty Father reigns,
And sheds his glorious goodness down
On all the blissful plains.

" Bright, like a sun, the Saviour sits,
And spreads eternal noon,
No evenings there, nor gloomy nights,
To want the feeble moon.

" Amidst those ever-shining skies
Behold the sacred Dove,
While banish'd sin and sorrow flies
From all the realms of love.

" The glorious tenants of the place
Stand bending round the throne;
And saints and seraphs sing and praise
The infinite Three-One.

" But O what beams of heavenly grace
Transport them all the while;
Ten thousand smiles from Jesu's face,
And love in every smile!"

WATTS.

O believer, what felicity is there in these *divine expectations!* enough to vivify thy soul, and animate it above the sordid miserable pursuits and agitations of a passing *dying world.* Soon shall the great spiritual harvest be gathered in, and the number of God's elect be accomplished: then shall the *end come;* and this world having answered the great design of the builder, shall be taken down for the fuel of destruction: then shall *the holy city, the new Jerusalem, come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband:* and then shall the great voice be heard out of heaven, saying—*Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people,* and God himself shall be with them, and be their God; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there any more pain, for the former things are passed away. O, be-

liever, who readest with a longing concern any thing which relates to the faithfulness of thy Lord, what a scene shall be presented to the expanded faculties of thy soul, when released from this house of clay! Here, O believer, thou mayest exult and be persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate thee from the love of God. O, may you and I in heaven shout this everlasting song,—Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever. Amen.

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